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Apuleius' Platonism

The Impersonation of Philosophy

RICHARD FLETCHER

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APULEIUS' PLATONISM

Apuleius of Madauros, writing in the latter half of the second century CE in Roman North Africa, is best known to us today for his Latin fiction, the *Metamorphoses* aka *The Golden Ass*, about a man who turned into a donkey and back again. However, he was also a Platonic philosopher, who, even though many of his writings are lost, wrote a range of rhetorical and philosophical works, which survive to this day. This book examines these works to reveal how Apuleius' Platonism is a result of his 'impersonation of philosophy', that is, a rhetorically powerful methodological tool that allows him to 'speak' on behalf of Plato and his philosophy. This book is the first exploration of the full scope of his idiosyncratic brand of Platonism across his multifarious literary corpus and is a major contribution to the study of the dynamic between literature and philosophy in antiquity and beyond.

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PREFACE

But let me tell you what this book is about. It explores the idiosyncratic brand of Platonism expounded in the multifarious literary corpus of Apuleius of Madauros. Apuleius, writing in the latter half of the second century CE in Roman North Africa, is best known to us today for his Latin fiction (*Metamorphoses* aka *The Golden Ass*) about a man who turned into a donkey and back again. However, he was also a Platonic philosopher, who, even though many of his writings are lost (e.g. a translation of Plato's *Phaedo*), wrote a range of rhetorical and philosophical works which we can read today. We have the speeches he delivered as a performing philosopher in the theatre of Carthage in a collection of excerpted orations (*Florida*) and also his defence speech as a Platonic philosopher on trial (*Apologia*). We also have a popular philosophical lecture on Platonic demonology (*De deo Socratis*), a translation of a cosmological treatise on the Platonic Universe (*De mundo*) and a handbook of Platonic natural and ethical philosophy (*De Platone et eius dogmate*). This book examines each of these works to reveal Apuleius' Platonism as a constant presence, in spite of diversity in approach, across his corpus. The consistency and diversity of Apuleius' Platonism is a result of what I call his 'impersonation of philosophy', that is, a rhetorically powerful methodological tool that allows Apuleius to 'speak' on behalf of Plato and his philosophy. This process of impersonation ranges throughout the corpus, from the display and forensic speeches of the philosopher on stage and on trial to the Platonic lecture, treatise and handbook. Rather than emphasise the complexity of either Apuleius' role in debates within so-called Middle Platonism or as part of the period of Hellenic cultural prestige in the Roman Empire (known as the Second Sophistic), this study sees Apuleius' Platonism as anchored by a

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simple synergy between philosophical ‘reason’ (*ratio*) and artistic speech (*oratio*). While this is far from an exhaustive study of either the Apuleian corpus or Apuleian Platonism, it does aim to be the first attempt at redirecting the conversation of Apuleian studies to a more responsible acknowledgment of the totality of his literary and philosophical achievement.

After an introductory chapter that sets out the main issues and key passages for approaching both the Apuleian corpus and Apuleius’ Platonism in terms of the idea of the impersonation of philosophy, each of the three main chapters of the book focuses on how Apuleius’ Platonism operates within each of his extant works. Following a general contextualisation within traditions of Platonic philosophy and genres of writing in the Roman Empire, [Chapter 2](#) focuses on a close reading of the Platonic handbook *De Platone*. The claim of this chapter is that the methodological approaches utilised by Apuleius to expound Platonic natural and ethical philosophy are established by the prefatory biography of Plato, first as a form of what I call ‘biographical exegesis’, then into related modes of exposition, from other voices or conceptual personifications (e.g. Reason, the Beholder of Virtue, the Sage), culminating in the voice of the exegete himself, as a generalised protreptic or call to philosophy. The internal dynamic of *De Platone* is then allowed to resonate throughout the book, first in [Chapter 3](#) in a discussion of the Platonic Universe in the treatise (*De mundo*) and lecture (*De deo Socratis*), then in [Chapter 4](#) with the forensic speech (*Apologia*) and excerpts of display speeches (*Florida*). The final chapter is not a fully fledged analysis of Apuleius’ masterpiece (*Metamorphoses*), but a suggestive coda offering a few tentative steps towards how we would begin to read this work in the same spirit as the other works that formed the core of this study. My aim in giving Apuleius’ masterpiece such short shrift in this book is to challenge my readers to take my findings and bring them to bear on the novel. In this way, this book acts as a displaced reading of the *Metamorphoses* that understands Apuleius’ Platonic corpus as the ‘intertextual grid’ (to borrow the phrase of the iconic work of Winkler (1985)) for the *Metamorphoses*.

Preface

For Apuleius' works, I have used the texts of Moreschini (1991), Vallette (1924) and Zimmerman (2012). All translations are my own, although I have greatly benefited from, and therefore must acknowledge here, my predecessors in the always challenging task of rendering Apuleius' Latin into another language. They are: Burges (1876), Beaujeu (1973), Hanson (1989), O'Donnell (1996), Kenney (1998), Harrison, Hilton and Hunink (2001), Lee (2001), Trzaskoma (2002), Relihan (2009) and Villalobos (2011).

This book originated in my 2006 Cambridge doctoral thesis, but has been substantially altered, expanded and rethought in the intervening years. I have David Fotheringham at Highgate to thank for making me a Latinist and Paul Millett at Downing for making a Classicist of me. I thank Philip Hardie, who first turned me on to Apuleius (via Winkler) during my Cambridge MPhil, and John Henderson, for supervising my PhD thesis and thus making me a fully fledged Apuleian. I thank my thesis examiners Stephen Harrison and Malcolm Schofield for their careful and encouraging comments at the start of this process. I am grateful to Michael Sharp and the series editors at the Cambridge Classical Studies Series (initially Michael Reeve, then Robin Osborne). I thank Richard Hunter and David Sedley in particular for all their help with improving the manuscript and for their patience throughout the process. During this time I am grateful for all the support and encouragement I have received for this project from many Classicist friends and colleagues. I have been fortunate to have presented my work on Apuleius to a range of audiences in North America and Europe, and I appreciate all the feedback I have received. For their support, professional, intellectual and personal, I want to thank the following in particular: Tony Boyle, Kirk Freudenburg, Erik Gunderson, Richard Hunter, Helen Morales and David Sedley.

Ohio State University (OSU) has been a wonderful place to work and I thank all my colleagues in the Classics Department here. For general mentoring, as well as advice on the manuscript, I am especially grateful to Ben Acosta-Hughes, Will Batstone, Frank Coulson, Fritz Graf, David Hahm, Anthony Kaldellis and Allan Silverman. I thank the OSU

Preface

graduate students, whose own work on Apuleius has made me rethink this project: Sarah Dubina, Sam Flores, Steve Maiullo, Aaron Palmore and Anna Peterson.

In terms of my thinking on Apuleius beyond OSU, I have benefited from many like-minded interlocutors, from pivotal conversations at conferences to more extended exchanges. I thank Ken Dowden, Denis Feeney, Julia Gaisser, Luca Graverini, Stephen Harrison, Vincent Hunink, Wytse Keulen, Andrew Laird, Claudio Moreschini, Eleanor Rust, Sonia Sabinis, John Penwill and Maaïke Zimmermann. I also want to especially thank Ellen Finkelpearl and Ben Lee for their singular enthusiasm and support for my project throughout.

I owe John Henderson the *pulchra merces* for teaching me by example, for inspiration and for the constant support throughout this process ('Words, Don't come easy'). Perhaps the point of the present book (and the original dissertation – that is, before it became itself again, *mutuo nexu*) has always been to explain how one of his footnotes (Henderson (2001) 189 n.10) relates to the statement it is set to explain.

It has been a long process for my closest friends and family, and I want to thank them here for their love and patience: my friends Ben Berlyn, Brendan Cooper, Jonathan Edwards, Hywel John, Richard Tacon, Duncan White; and my family: Eneko Campos-Fletcher, Abbe Fletcher, Alan Fletcher, Shielagh Finlay, Louise Jones, Dan Leonard and Lois Ray Leonard.

For our son Eneko, for our life together, for her daily love and guiding inspiration, this book is dedicated to *mi pareja*, Rebeka Campos-Astorkiza.

ABBREVIATIONS

Periodicals are cited according to the abbreviations in *L'Année philologique*, except for the usual anglicisations, e.g. *TAPA* for *TAPhA*.

Works within the Apuleian corpus are referenced with the following abbreviations:

<i>Apol.</i>	<i>Apologia</i>
<i>Fl.</i>	<i>Florida</i>
<i>Met.</i>	<i>Metamorphoses</i>
<i>Mu.</i>	<i>De mundo</i>
<i>Pl.</i>	<i>De Platone et eius dogmate</i>
<i>Soc.</i>	<i>De deo Socratis</i>

Unless otherwise stated, the texts and editions used throughout are:

Moreschini (1991) for *Mu.*, *Pl.*, *Soc.*

Lee (2005) for *Fl.*

Hunink (1997) for *Apol.*

Zimmerman (2012) for *Met.*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Apuleian corpus

The scrupulous reader, according to the role that Apuleius has scripted, is one who closely observes details and will object to inconsistencies.¹

Apuleius of Madauros, who lived in the second half of the second century CE in Roman North Africa, is best known today as the author of the *Metamorphoses* (aka *The Golden Ass*), a fictional narrative about the transformation of a man into a donkey. Yet, unlike other ancient fiction writers, such as Petronius, Longus, Heliodorus or Achilles Tatius, we are fortunate to have more than Apuleius' work of fiction to read. Even though much of Apuleius' literary production is now lost to us, and some of what has been ascribed to him is of disputed authenticity, we can still read five authentic works: a forensic defence speech (*Apologia*), a collection of excerpted epideictic orations (*Florida*), a popular philosophical lecture (*De deo Socratis*), a cosmological treatise (*De mundo*) and a handbook of Platonic natural and ethical philosophy (*De Platone et eius dogmate*).² These five works, taken together with the *Metamorphoses*, comprise a literary corpus that is comparable in diversity to that of any other ancient author.³ In spite of this diversity, however,

¹ Winkler (1985) 61, in a discussion of the *lector scrupulosus* addressed by Lucius at *Met.* 9.30.

² As the debate stands, I agree with the consensus view that the *Asclepius* and *Peri hermeneias*, both of which have been attributed to Apuleius, are not authentic works. For a helpful summary of the arguments for and against, see Harrison (2000) 10–14. However, I am also well aware that this present study could provide some momentum to arguments that would reopen the authenticity debate of either work.

³ While the claim could be made for the corpus diversity of several other authors (e.g. Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch) to compete with Apuleius, few, if any, of these corpora are more immediately divisive than the Apuleian. On the benefits of reading the Senecan corpus as a whole, see Ker (2006).

there have been several literally divisive issues that have prevented a full appreciation of the corpus as a whole. First of all, the *Metamorphoses*, as the undisputed masterpiece of the corpus, has dominated and directed any engagement with, and caused inconsistencies of attention to, the other extant works.⁴ In addition, the corpus has too often been simplistically divided into ‘literary’ or ‘rhetorical’ works (*Metamorphoses*, *Apologia* and *Florida*) and ‘philosophical’ or ‘Platonic’ works (*De deo Socratis*, *De Platone* and *De mundo*).⁵ That this division pressurises Apuleius’ identity as an author is clear from two broad reconciliatory approaches that seek to understand Apuleius as either a novelist who dabbled in Platonism or as a Platonist who tried his hand at novel-writing.⁶

By way of introducing some of the debates surrounding how we read the Apuleian corpus, I shall first explore an alternative approach to the standard themes of the centrality of the *Metamorphoses* and the division between literature and philosophy. Then I shall show how the question of authorship, which was critical to these two traditional approaches, can actually lead the way in decentring and unifying the corpus in terms of Apuleius’ particular approach to Platonism as inspired by a key moment in the reception of the Apuleian corpus: Walter Pater’s *Marius the Epicurean*. Pater’s approach leads us to an appreciation of Apuleius’ identity as a Platonist that provides coherence to the corpus and not division. This coherence will then be explored in a series of passages of Apuleius’ speeches from the *Florida* collection that not only emphasise the unity of his literary production with his philosophical activities, but also reflect

⁴ For the primacy of the *Met.* and the role of the rest of the corpus as backdrop, see Winkler (1985) 5–6. All major studies of the whole corpus – Sandy (1997), Harrison (2000), May (2006) – make the *Met.* not only the end-point of their analyses, but the *telos* of their arguments.

⁵ For how this division is grounded in the early transmission of Apuleius’ works, see the illuminating and balanced discussion of Gaisser (2008) 1–41, especially comments at 36 and 40–1 with n. 3. On the manuscript tradition in general, see Reynolds (1983) 15–19.

⁶ For the former, see Harrison (2000) 255, and Schlam (1992) 11, for the latter. It is the latter that Augustine and Macrobius refer to in their brief references to the *Met.* On an author’s literary career as a totalising ‘preparation’ for a novel, see Léger in Barthes (2010) viii, ‘it is unquestionably the totality of Barthes’ oeuvre that can be heard throughout *The Preparation of the Novel*’.

on how he mobilises his cultural identity, in terms of his bilingualism to philosophical aims. This revisionist approach to the Apuleian corpus readdresses Apuleius' Platonism in terms of my main theme of the impersonation of philosophy.

Decentring the corpus: the Metamorphoses

The *Metamorphoses* is the undisputed masterpiece of the Apuleian corpus. It is often read separately from Apuleius' other works, and discussed in relation to other ancient novels and a range of traditions of Greek and Roman poetry and prose.⁷ Even when the other works of the Apuleian corpus are discussed, the shadow of the *Metamorphoses* looms so large that it demands to be not only the end-point of the discussion of the whole corpus, but also the rationale for discussion of the corpus. In many ways, the other works of the Apuleian corpus, and even the very idea of an Apuleian corpus, have been understood as acting as so many footnotes to the *Metamorphoses*. Given this understandable gravitation towards Apuleius' masterpiece, any attempt to come to terms with the Apuleian corpus as a whole suffers an imbalance and is necessarily inconsistent. Highlighting this inconsistency is not merely my criticism of a blinkered scholarly approach, but also a way of showing how the corpus, itself a kind of consistency, has not been sufficiently theorised in Apuleian studies.⁸ When we use the term 'corpus' to describe an author's body of work, his or her 'whole corpus' is more often than not understood. Thus, either an inconsistent reading of a corpus or a description of a corpus as inconsistent can undermine the status of a corpus *qua* corpus.⁹

⁷ See Graverini (2007) for a fully developed reading of the *Met.* in terms of the range of Greek and Roman literature.

⁸ The nearest we get to a critical account of the Apuleian corpus is in a passing comment in Too (1996) 152: 'Apuleius is the deity of the Apuleian corpus. Accordingly, efforts to produce (*sic.*) representations of Apuleius other than the complex *personae* which he has authorised in his texts are sacrilegious acts against his true person.'

⁹ Derrida (2001) 14 refers to his use of the 'old concept' of *oeuvre*, 'because the strategic wager I make at a certain point, when I say "this rather than that", means that, beyond the limits of this context, tomorrow, whatever the situation may be, whatever I say will still have a certain consistency – even if there is no scientific value that is omnitemporal and universal, what I say will still be considered an *oeuvre*.'

If surveys of the Apuleian corpus are too often guided by an attempt to make sense of one work (the *Metamorphoses*), then the very idea of a corpus as any kind of consistency or unity is simultaneously put in question.¹⁰ Even so, the presence of a masterpiece like the *Metamorphoses* can also call for a particular consistency of approach to the corpus in terms of retroactive reading, i.e. the reading of one work back onto the whole.¹¹ Therefore, it is a more important question, albeit somewhat beyond the limits of the present study, to understand how the presence of a masterpiece like the *Metamorphoses* makes a corpus like Apuleius' at one and the same time both inconsistent and consistent, rather than passively accepting it as either the end-point or the rationale for discussing or dismissing the rest of the works in a given corpus. To give a concrete example, if Apuleius' *De Platone* is to be understood in terms of the Apuleian corpus, as in this present study, this dry Platonic handbook must first be approached from a position that resists, even if it does not directly disregard, the retroactive reading of the work under the need to understand the *Metamorphoses*. Yet resisting the pull of the *Metamorphoses* does not entail the traditionally polarised reading of *De Platone* that isolates it from the rest of the corpus and instead incorporates it into another discursive unity, e.g. 'Middle Platonism'. Indeed one could argue that there was as much of a push effect on the dry handbook from readers of the literary masterpiece as a pull effect from scholars of the history of Platonism. Instead, as we shall see, the decentring of the Apuleian corpus allows for a work like *De Platone*, as a two-book handbook of Platonic natural and ethical philosophy introduced by a brief biography of Plato, to occupy a mediating role between the two works on cosmology and demonology (*De mundo*, *De deo Socratis*) and the two works locating the philosopher-speaker in a community (*Apologia*, *Florida*). By placing another work at the

¹⁰ On the problem of the corpus as a unity, see Foucault (1995) 27: 'The *oeuvre* can be regarded neither as an immediate unity, nor as a certain unity, nor as a homogeneous unity.' On Foucault's conception of the *oeuvre*, see Fisher (1999) and, for the related debate surrounding Foucault's own *corpus* after his death, see Jones (2000).

¹¹ For this idea of retroactivism, see Levinson (1996) 242–73 and Livingston (2005).

centre of my discussion of the Apuleian corpus I am by no means challenging the consensus view that the *Metamorphoses* is Apuleius' masterpiece. In fact, if you read my table of contents, you see that I too conclude my study of the corpus with a discussion of the *Metamorphoses*. Yet, as my own scrupulous reader will ascertain, unlike other comparable corpus-wide surveys, this book positions the novel as neither providing a *telos* nor a legitimating rationale for my reading of the rest of the corpus; rather, *Met.* and its discussion act as postscript or epilogue and, for my ideal reader, signal work still yet to come.

Unifying the corpus: literature and philosophy

Apuleius didn't know how Classics departments would compartmentalise the interface between literature and philosophy.¹²

Decentring the Apuleian corpus, by replacing the masterpiece *Metamorphoses* with a 'minor' work, like *De Platone*, has the effect of bringing attention to the issue of unity and, in particular, the division between literary and philosophical works. This division will not bridge the decentred corpus, since replacing a 'literary' work (*Metamorphoses*) with a 'philosophical' work (*De Platone*) will only tip the scale in the other direction. This division is deep-rooted and has persisted in the separation of Apuleian scholarship into studies of the philosophical works and the literary works.¹³ This separation is extended to the types of readings the representatives of each side have elicited. For example, the literary texture of the *Apologia* has been emphasised over its Platonic significance.¹⁴ While there have been some attempts at cross-fertilisation, especially surrounding the mediating role of *De deo Socratis*, the former

¹² Henderson (2001) 189, with n. 10, although the footnote tells tales on Apuleius' commentators for some adverbially tendentious interpretations, leaving the reader (*this* reader) to make the connection between the promised interface between literature and philosophy in Apuleius, which, you, scrupulous reader, can detect throughout the present book.

¹³ At the bibliographical level, we have Schlam and Finkelpearl (2000) on the *Met.*; and Bajoni (1992) for the philosophical works.

¹⁴ See the several discussions in Riess (2008a), including Harrison (2008), and my response in Fletcher (2009a).

has generally been grounded in the doctrinal wrangling of so-called Middle Platonism while the latter has emphasised the cultural contexts of the so-called Second Sophistic. We may understand the extent of this division by observing that these two problematic scholarly tags – Middle Platonism and the Second Sophistic – are rarely evoked in the same context.¹⁵ Furthermore, this division has been exacerbated by the domineering presence of the *Metamorphoses*, for which the philosophical works have retroactively been mobilised to support ‘philosophical’ or ‘Platonic’ readings of the novel and the literary works to ground the novel within a broader cultural context of rhetorical performance.¹⁶ Yet, if temporarily discounting the *Metamorphoses* can decentre the corpus and allow for its identity as a corpus to be better understood, then the same may be said of uniting the split between philosophy and literature. If, for example, the corpus was re-centred around, say, *De deo Socratis*, this would have a major impact on the ways in which the other works also bridge the imagined divide. Instead of ‘philosophical’ works (*De mundo*; *De Platone*) and ‘rhetorical’ works (*Apologia*; *Florida*), the popular philosophical lecture on Platonic demonology could unify the corpus with an emphasis on an aspect such as its methodological nuances. For example, its opening description of Plato’s vision of the Universe not only recalls the cosmological focus of *De mundo*, but also the guiding role of Plato for Apuleius’ defence in the *Apologia*. In addition, its concluding protreptic, calling for its audience to embrace the philosophical life, engages the opening biography and ethical second book of *De Platone* as well as the figure of the philosopher-speaker of the *Florida* collection. Again, as with the *Metamorphoses*, I am not claiming that the interface between literature and philosophy in the Apuleian corpus would disappear with a re-centred corpus based around *De deo Socratis*. In fact, to once again return to my table of contents, it looks as if I too am maintaining this separation by discussing the ‘rhetorical’ works (*Apologia* and *Florida*) in

¹⁵ Fowler (2008) is an exception.

¹⁶ See Schlam and Finkelpearl (2000).

their own separate chapter. Nonetheless, to once again call on my *lector scrupulosus*, unlike my afterthoughts about the *Metamorphoses*, these ‘rhetorical’ works legitimate and act as the *telos* for the Apuleian corpus in terms of Apuleius’ Platonism.

Imagining authorship

Through addressing the Apuleian corpus in terms of the two interrelated processes of decentring and unifying we reach, by different paths, the same issue: authorship. Attempts at making sense of the corpus both in terms of the status of the *Metamorphoses* as a masterpiece and through emphasis on the philosophical and literary divide have relied on painting the portrait of Apuleius as an author. To all intents and purposes, the centrality of the *Metamorphoses* means immediately that we are to understand Apuleius as a novelist. When extended to the literary/philosophical divide, we then ask: is the novelist a Platonist or a sophist, an orator, literary artist, intellectual or a philosopher?¹⁷ In this mould, an ‘Apuleius-as-Platonist’ reading is ultimately a means of legitimating Platonic readings of the *Metamorphoses*.¹⁸ Meanwhile, an ‘Apuleius-as-sophist’ reading, and its younger sibling, the ‘Apuleius-as-intellectual’ reading, both show how the *Metamorphoses* is a typical product of the Second Sophistic milieu.¹⁹

¹⁷ Haight (1963) 89: ‘Perhaps each one of us according to our temperaments will find Apuleius most successful, most real as man, novelist, lawyer, sophist, philosopher, or literary artist.’ Platonist: Regen (1971) and Hijmans (1987); African Socrates: Schindel (2000) and Riess (2008a); Latin sophist: Harrison (2000); intellectual: Harrison (2008); orator: Hijmans (1994); literary artist: Harrison (2002). For literary artist, philosopher and magician, see Pennacini, Donini, Alimonti, Monteduro Roccavini (1979). For a choice between magician and Platonic philosopher, see Moreschini (2000). Sandy (1997) adopts various hybrid identities: Orator Sophisticus Latinus, Philosophus Sophisticus Latinus, Fabulator Latinus. But none of these top Apuleius: Orator Metasophisticus of Núñez (2009).

¹⁸ O’Brien (2002) is a partial example of this. Her first chapter explores Apuleius’ conception of philosophical discourse across the corpus, but the bulk of her book is squarely focused on the *Met.*, with support from *Pl.* and *Soc.*

¹⁹ Sandy (1997) and Harrison (2000). The inclusion of *Soc.* in Harrison, Hilton and Hunink (2001) shows its importance for the sophistic reading.

Introduction

More nuanced attempts to view the corpus through the projected identity of the author of the *Metamorphoses*, however, create a fantastic re-imagining of the corpus as a representation of the novelist's literary career in its various phases.²⁰ Consider the following spoof account of Apuleius the pseudo-intellectual:

Apuleius was a showman and a playboy, clever but shallow. He deserved to be condemned for seducing a rich widow, but had the temerity to ground his innocence in the intellectual community between himself and the judge (the *Apology*). His egotism made him publish four books of highlights from his display speeches (the *Florida*). Intellectual vanity made him write a hack account of *Socrates and his Deity*. Finally his talents found a legitimate outlet in a comic novel about a man's life as an ass (the *Metamorphoses*).²¹

Swain's wry re-imagining of Apuleius' literary trajectory projects the *Metamorphoses* as the 'legitimate outlet' for his talents and, as such, the fitting *telos* to a career of bombastic public intellectualism.²² Swain's skit ultimately parodies those approaches to the Apuleian corpus that feel the need to see it as an extension of the curious personality of the author at its centre, while at the same time resisting the urge to reduce him to one particular totalising 'reading'.²³ In spite of its obvious humour, Swain's portrait of Apuleius the author helps make a serious claim on how the corpus should be viewed beyond the centrality of the novel and the division between literature and philosophy. On one level, Swain's approach may appear to focus on the *Metamorphoses* as retroactively legitimating the author's previous work, hinting at its status as authorial

²⁰ On the role of a creative narrative of the literary career for the re-imagining of the literary corpus, see Hardie and Moore (2010).

²¹ Swain (2001) 269, repeated, straight-faced, at Swain (2004) 12.

²² There is much to be gleaned from this caricature of the Apuleian corpus. The mention of Apuleius' 'temerity' in the *Apol.* paints Apuleius with the same brush he used on the prosecutor Aemilianus (*temeritas*, *Apol.* 1.1) and juxtaposes the reference to the 'intellectual community' between Apuleius and Claudius Maximus. *Soc.* is dubbed a 'hack account', on the grounds that other writers, such as Plutarch and Maximus of Tyre, wrote on the same Platonic topic, in order to undermine any philosophical credentials Apuleius may be thought to have.

²³ Although the sophist and, more recently, the intellectual are both bent on this all-encompassing, catch-all approach.

autobiography.²⁴ On another level, it shows in the career of a novelist before the novel how an author seeks the appropriate genre for his or her particular talents and thus portrays the works leading up to the novel as a whole and not somehow read through the *Metamorphoses*. Swain's Apuleius is also not somehow split between philosophy and literature; his character traits ('temerity', 'egotism' and 'intellectual vanity') are consistent across 'rhetorical works' (*Apologia*; *Florida*) and 'philosophical' works (*De deo Socratis*). The latter being a 'hack' account betrays his misplaced philosophical pretensions. In this way Swain, a leading authority on the Second Sophistic period, shares the view of Apuleius' pseudo-philosophical identity with several exponents of Middle Platonism. Compare Dillon's claim that '[w]hat we must always bear in mind is that Apuleius, despite his protestations, is not a philosopher'.²⁵ For Dillon's 'protestations' read Swain's 'intellectual vanity'. Indeed, when Swain encounters a figure whom he considers to be a legitimate philosopher – Dio of Prusa – being compared to Apuleius, he imagines the former 'turning in his grave'.²⁶ In spite of this policing the borders of legitimate philosophical activity in the Roman Empire, Swain's playful approach has the benefit of successfully bestriding the division of literature and philosophy in the Apuleian corpus without relying on the *Metamorphoses* as anything but the legitimisation of Apuleius' mediocrity at both.²⁷ Nonetheless, as the present study will argue this can occur without the negation of Apuleius' philosophical significance; but to find support for such an approach we have to go back to the end of the nineteenth century and to a curiously Apuleian figure from Victorian England: Walter Pater.

In Walter Pater's novel *Marius the Epicurean* we are offered a fictional portrait of Apuleius and his literary career that begins with the boy Marius reading the *Metamorphoses* as the so-called 'Golden Book':

²⁴ For autobiographical readings of the *Met.*, see Hicter (1944/5); Winkler (1985) 5, with n. 5.

²⁵ Dillon (1977) 311. ²⁶ Swain (2001) 269.

²⁷ For a very different approach to Apuleius' 'mediocrity', see Chapter 4 below.

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The *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius, coming to Marius just then, figured for him as indeed *The Golden Book*; he felt a sort of personal gratitude to the writer, and saw in it doubtless far more than was there for any other reader. It occupied always a peculiar place in his remembrance, never quite losing its power in frequent return to it for the revival of that first glowing impression.²⁸

Indeed, later in life we find Marius being invited to a dinner where his boyhood hero was set to perform. Before the dinner, the now mature Marius anticipates the event with a moment of reflective self-questioning and self-accusation:

The great Apuleius, the literary ideal of his boyhood, had arrived in Rome, was now visiting Tusculum, at the house of their common friend, a certain aristocratic poet who loved every sort of superiorities; and Marius was favoured with an invitation to a supper given in his honour. It was with a feeling of half-humorous concession to his own early boyish hero-worship, yet with some sense of superiority in himself, seeing his old curiosity grown now almost to indifference when on the point of satisfaction at last, and upon a juster estimate of its object, that he mounted to the little town on the hillside, the foot-ways of which were so many flights of easy-going steps gathered round a single great house under shadow of the 'haunted' ruins of Cicero's villa on the wooded heights. He found a touch of weirdness in the circumstance that in so romantic a place he had been bidden to meet the writer who was come to seem almost like one of the personages in his own fiction.²⁹

During the dinner party, Pater's Apuleius starts to speak, producing something like the epideictic orations we know from the *Florida* collection. After dinner, however, Marius gets a chance to meet Apuleius himself and the ensuing discussion – based on the account of Platonic demonology in *De deo Socratis* – both tallies with the 'weirdness' of the occasion, taking place before Cicero's ghost, and stages a revision of Marius' opinion of his and Apuleius' present significance. For Marius, the re-imagining of Apuleius exemplifies his own mixed conception of 'Platonic spiritualism' and 'relish for merely bodily graces'. Pater's Marius describes this Apuleius *redux* as follows:

²⁸ Pater (1885) 42. On Apuleius and Pater's Marius, see Haight (1963) 84–9, Brzenk (1978), Harrison (2004) and Sandy and Harrison (2008) 315–16.

²⁹ Pater (1885) 138.

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Apuleius was a Platonist: only, for him, the *Ideas* of Plato were no creatures of logical abstraction, but in very truth informing souls, in every type and variety of sensible things.³⁰

Marius' realisation of Apuleius' philosophical credentials not only allays his fears over the enduring significance of the 'Golden Book' in his own intellectual development, but also retroactively legitimates his own youthful reading of the juvenilia of a now fully fledged Platonist. Both Swain and Pater offer a fictional re-imaging of the Apuleian corpus in terms of a trajectory of the celebrated author's career. The one sees the *Metamorphoses* as a satisfactory end-point, the other, as a work that retroactively legitimised the juvenilia of a Platonist. The one sees the failed philosophical pretensions of the author across his works; the other a nuanced brand of aestheticised philosophising that began with the youthful novel.

It will come as no surprise that it is Pater's Apuleius that is closer to the Apuleius you will encounter in the present study; indeed Marius' moment of realisation – that Apuleius is a Platonist – is pivotal to its whole trajectory. My Apuleius and Marius' Apuleius, furthermore, must be understood in terms of how a particular approach to aestheticism insists that literature and philosophy are always simultaneously in play.³¹ Furthermore, Pater's view as ventriloquised by his character intimates that nowhere is this simultaneity more visible than in the issue of authorship. The idea that a life can be authored traverses any kind of literary or philosophical borderline. For example, reading *Marius the Epicurean* in terms of the authorship not only of Apuleius, but also of Pater, means we must explain how the judgement of a fictional character (Marius) on an historical author (Apuleius) parallels the work's authorial judgement (Pater). In other words, how does Pater's own conception of Platonism inform Marius' judgement of Apuleius? To make an attempt at answering this question, we may compare, for example, a passage from the section on 'The Genius of Plato' in

³⁰ Pater (1885) 143. For how Apuleius also conflates a discussion of the Platonic Theory of Forms with a discussion of the soul (e.g. *Pl.* 1.6.193), see Fletcher (forthcoming).

³¹ See Martindale (2005).

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Pater's late lectures *Plato and Platonism*. In this passage, Pater parallels the juxtaposition of the intelligible and sensible realms in terms of the matter of characterisation:

When Plato is dealing with the inmost elements of personality, his eye is still on its object, on *character* as seen in *characteristics*, through those details, which make character a sensible fact, the changes of colour in the face as of tone in the voice³²

Pater's Plato deals with the 'inmost elements of personality' in terms of the 'sensible facts' of character. This can be compared with Pater's Marius' Apuleius the Platonist, whose ideas are 'truth informing souls, in every type and variety of sensible things'. That both Pater's Plato and Marius' Apuleius mobilise a view of Platonism that is simultaneously intelligible ('inmost elements'; 'ideas') and sensible is, furthermore, grounded in an overarching aestheticism. Indeed it is Plato the simultaneous founding author of literary dialogues and of philosophical ideas that informs Marius' Apuleius as simultaneously author of the Golden Book and Platonist.³³ To return to the Apuleian corpus with Pater's nuanced view of Platonic authorship in mind, we can finally appreciate how Apuleius is in need of re-evaluation.

Apuleius on his literary production

In looking for Apuleius' own self-portrait as an author in terms of a conception of his own corpus, there are two much-cited passages from the *Florida* in which he recounts the conditions and diversity of his writing. *Florida* 20 is a brief excerpt from a speech in which Apuleius describes the extent of his education in terms of the metaphor of learning as a succession of drinks from a variety of wine-cups. He boasts that he has drunk wine not only from the three cups of traditional education, but also from other cups during his years of higher education in Athens (*Fl.* 20.4):

³² Pater (1893) 130–1.

³³ For a discussion of the reception of this kind of Plato in antiquity, see Hunter (2012).

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hactenus a plerisque potatur. ego et alias creterras Athenis bibi: poeticae comptam, geometriae limpidam, musicae dulcem, dialecticae austerulam, iam uero uniuersae philosophiae inexplabilem scilicet et nectaream.³⁴

Most people go this far in drinking. Yet I have drunk wine from other cups at Athens: the adorned cup of poetry, the transparent cup of geometry, the sweet wine of music, the somewhat dry wine of dialectic, and, finally, the bottomless cup and nectar-sweet wine of universal philosophy.

The balanced juxtaposition of the first four cups is ultimately reconciled with the dual status of the final cup of universal philosophy. Apuleius expands on philosophy's all-encompassing variety by immediately listing a range of philosophical authors and their genres (*Fl.* 20.5–6):

canit enim Empedocles carmina, Plato dialogos, Socrates hymnos, Epicharmus modos, Xenophon historias, Crates satiras. Apuleius uester haec omnia nouemque Musas pari studio colit, maiore scilicet uoluntate quam facultate.

For Empedocles produced poems; Plato, dialogues; Socrates, hymns; Epicharmus, mimes; Xenophon, histories; Crates, satires. Your Apuleius cultivates all of these and the nine Muses with equal enthusiasm, albeit with more zeal than ability.

Apuleius moves seamlessly from his higher education in Athens and the various intellectual disciplines he encountered there to the range of philosophical genres of his Greek predecessors and, finally, to his own literary production. When Apuleius states that he has cultivated these philosophers' works, he means not only that he has studied them, but also that he too has produced comparable works.³⁵ His (faux?) modesty

³⁴ I have tried to bring out the alternating aspects of the Athenian *creterras* in my translation, balancing between the cup as vessel and the types of wine it contains, culminating in the all-encompassing image of the wine-cup of philosophy. As we shall see, time and again, this juxtaposition corresponds to the central dynamic at the heart of Apuleius' Platonism between *labor* and *elegantia*, *ratio* and *oratio*, *utile* and *dulce*. For the latter theme, see Graverini (2007) and (2010).

³⁵ Apuleius conflates the idea of self-cultivation and education elsewhere in *Fl.*, when writing about himself as well as other philosophical forerunners. He boasts that 'always from the beginning of my days, I have cultivated good arts conscientiously' (*semper ab ineunte aeuo bonas artes sedulo colui*, *Fl.* 17.4); and how he would 'more studiously cultivate your [the people of Carthage's] lessons' (*uestras disciplinas studiosius percolo*, *Fl.* 18.36). Of others, he describes how 'Pythagoras also cultivated him [Pherecydes] as a master' (*eum quoque Pythagoras magistrum coluit*, *Fl.* 15.19). But perhaps the most important extension of this metaphor for the present study

in emphasising his ‘enthusiasm’ (*studium*) and ‘zeal’ (*uoluntas*) above his ‘ability’ (*facultas*) links this passage with another excerpt included in the *Florida* collection, where he offers an explicit account of the range of his literary production, again with an emphasis on its particularly philosophical focus. In a comparison between his own literary production and the polymathic output of the fifth-century sophist Hippias, Apuleius explains his limitations in handicrafts at the same time as extolling his literary abilities (*Fl.* 9.27–9):

prorsum enim non eo infitias nec radio nec subula nec lima nec torno nec id genus ferramentis uti nosse, sed pro his praeoptare me fateor uno chartario calamo me reficere poemata omnigenus apta uirgae, lyrae, socco, coturno, item satiras ac griphos, item historias uarias rerum nec non orationes laudatas disertis nec non dialogos laudatos philosophis, atque haec et alia eiusdem modi tam Graece quam Latine, gemino uoto, pari studio, simili stilo.

I confess that I have no skill whatsoever with a shuttle, nor an awl, nor the file, nor the lathe, nor any kind of metal-working tool, but I profess my preference above all of these for a single papyrus reed for me to refashion all genres of poetry, those fit for the epic rod, the lyre, the comic slipper and the tragic boot; satires and riddles too, narratives of various kinds, and speeches praised by the learned, as well as dialogues praised by philosophers. I have fashioned these and other works of the same kind as much in Greek as in Latin, with twin devotion, equal enthusiasm and similar style.

As in the list of metaphorical wine-cups, this list of literary genres culminates with philosophy. His ‘equal enthusiasm’ (*pari studio*) for literary production in both Greek and Latin directly corresponds to his ‘equal enthusiasm’ (*pari studio*, *Fl.* 20.6) in cultivating both philosophy and the Muses. The cumulative effect of these excerpted passages is that Apuleius not only conflates his Athenian education with reading a variety of philosophical genres, but his philosophical education with his own literary production. As Sandy has observed of Apuleius, with reference to these passages, ‘whenever he refers to his literary activities he simultaneously emphasises his philosophical achievements.’³⁶ This simultaneity demonstrates how Apuleius

appears in *Soc.* in terms of the ‘cultivation of one’s own *daemon*, which is the cultivation of nothing less than an oath of allegiance to philosophy’ (*in sui... daemonis cultum, qui cultus non aliud quam philosophiae sacramentum est*, *Soc.* 22.170).

³⁶ Sandy (1997) 179.

imagines his work as both literary and philosophical, without any need to compartmentalise the interface between the two.³⁷ This parallels the idea of the corpus as itself a unity without inconsistencies. Yet this characterisation only goes so far since it still distances Apuleius' literary activities (e.g. writing in numerous literary genres) and philosophical achievements (e.g. his wide-ranging education in Athens). Yet when imagined in terms of Apuleius' bilingualism this distinction is completely broken down. The *Florida* extracts are all taken from speeches delivered in Carthage in the 160s and they are all written and delivered in Latin.³⁸ What, therefore, is the point for his audience when Apuleius emphasises his bilingualism at the same time as communicating to them in Latin? I would argue that it is the same gesture as his mentioning his Athenian education to explain his literary output. For Apuleius, his identity as a Platonist philosopher is bound up with the idea of translation between the Greek and Latin languages as symbolic of his introduction of Plato to a Latin-speaking audience. When discussing his literary production, Apuleius refers not only to his philosophical activities, but also to his bilingualism. Yet, as with Apuleius' studies in Athens, his bilingualism has been too often understood more as an objective fact and less as a rhetorical strategy or mode of philosophising.³⁹ Metaphorical bilingualism intimates the same process as Pater's Plato in showing innate personality (Greek) through sensible form (Latin). In this way, the portrait of the North African author learning Greek and writing Latin plays on a certain form of impersonation that does not negate the 'fact' of his bilingualism, but highlights the purpose of its continued emphasis. Indeed it is this idea of impersonation that operates as the key concept for an appreciation of how the Apuleian corpus generates its meaning in terms of Apuleius' Platonism.

³⁷ Fletcher (forthcoming) explores how this works even as Apuleius is translating Plato's *Phaedo*.

³⁸ *Fl.* 18 is an exception, with its concluding bilingual dialogue (now lost) in both Greek and Latin. On which see [Chapter 4](#) below.

³⁹ For a brief account of the facts of Apuleius' bilingualism in the presence of Fronto and Gellius, see Swain (2004) 12–14.

The impersonation of philosophy

In the *Florida*, Apuleius imagines his own diverse literary corpus and his role as author as in terms of his philosophical and cultural identity. This conflation of literary production, philosophical activity and cultural identity is at the heart of the central idea of the present study: the ‘impersonation’ of philosophy. The phrase relies on two broad nuances that I must spend some time here fleshing out, first in terms of what I mean by impersonation and, second, the implications of the whole phrase: ‘impersonation of philosophy’.

Impersonation is a theatrical concept that both promotes and negates theatricality, whereby the ideas of acting and remaining yourself, of performing and living, remain in constant tension.⁴⁰ It also has resonances for issues of the voice (i.e. speaking as someone else, or for someone else) and the body (i.e. embodiment) more broadly.⁴¹ It is of further significance how impersonation of voice and body seems intrinsically at odds with impersonality (i.e. the claim of objectivity, or a view from nowhere), when, as we shall see, in fact there is a close relation. Finally, perhaps the most pertinent nuance, and that which explains the sceptical tone in discussions of Apuleius as a philosopher and Platonist, such as those voiced by Swain and Dillon above, is the valence of the term impersonator as shorthand for impostor.

Once these various nuances resonating in the idea of impersonation are coupled with philosophy in the phrase ‘the impersonation of philosophy’, there is an even broader range of issues for us to sift through. The immediate hinge swings between the interpretation of philosophy being impersonated *by* someone (e.g. a philosopher or a Platonist; an impostor or a sophist) or something (e.g. a metaphor, a literary trope or

⁴⁰ For this particular nuance, I am inspired by Melville (1986) in his deconstructive critique of Michael Fried’s polarity between absorption and theatricality. The more I consider this particular reference, the more it makes sense of the direction of some of my current research into the dynamic between Classical literature and philosophy and contemporary art. For some reason, Marcel Duchamp’s decision to stop making art seems particularly appropriate as well.

⁴¹ For ideas of impersonation and voice, I am primarily influenced by Chion (1999) and Dolar (2006).

genre, such as an autobiographical narrative) and that it is philosophy herself that is somehow doing the impersonating (i.e. the ways Philosophy ‘speaks’). For the former, philosophy’s impostor – aka the sophist – would appear to be the one impersonating philosophy – calling himself a philosopher and claiming what he does is philosophy.⁴² Yet, looking beyond the figure of the philosophical impostor, this idea of impersonation could also be used to describe the very nature of the philosophical tradition itself. This is not only in terms of the very retroactive recourse to the term ‘philosopher’, but also extending to different schools, movements and -isms. This amounts to how a philosopher ‘arrogates the voice’ of philosophy.⁴³ From here, it is no great leap to an understanding of how we could see a Philosophy who herself impersonates, since one way in which Philosophy simultaneously demands an ‘arrogation of voice’ herself is in terms of a style or discourse, with her claim to impersonality emphasised most of all.⁴⁴ Furthermore, this active impersonation of Philosophy occurs even in modes of philosophising that demand the speaking about and writing of philosophy in a markedly impersonal way. This can then be described in terms of certain methodological choices of how philosophy is (or should be) pursued as an activity and the related question of philosophical style.⁴⁵ Yet as soon as issues of style appear, there is a retroactive need for the positing of philosophy as agent in articulating how Philosophy should *speak*. Here we hit another kind of impersonation: personification. To argue for how a personified figure of Philosophy *should* speak either claims *that* Philosophy speaks (personification) or disguises someone speaking *for* Philosophy (impersonation). Once here we are too close to the realm of metaphor and trope, and philosophy seems to be taken over by that impostor: literature.⁴⁶ And so on and so forth.

⁴² On the necessary face-off between philosopher and sophist, see Badiou (1999).

⁴³ For the arrogation of philosophy, see Cavell (1996) and Critchely (1999).

⁴⁴ For the distinction between impersonality and impersonation in philosophy and literature, see Mason (1999) and Cameron (2007).

⁴⁵ In terms of philosophical style, I am guided by Derrida (1982) and Lang (1990), among others.

⁴⁶ For philosophy and tropes, see De Man (1979).

I fully appreciate how convoluted this discussion is already getting, so let me make a couple of concrete observations about the permutations of the impersonation of philosophy for the Apuleian corpus. In the passages already discussed in the *Florida*, we saw how Apuleius conflates his literary production with his philosophical and cultural identity. First of all by tying his literary production to philosophy, Apuleius is not only impersonating philosophy by showing how he can write philosophy in numerous literary genres (e.g. dialogue, hymn), but also dramatising philosophy's own impersonatory use of literature (e.g. Plato wrote dialogues, Socrates composed a hymn to Apollo – albeit in one of Plato's dialogues!). In terms of how this relates to Apuleius' philosophical identity as a self-professed Platonist philosopher, we can see how he arrogates a particular philosophical tradition and, within that tradition, the particular impersonation of his master Plato. Across his corpus, this impersonation of Plato ranges from writing a handbook (*De Platone*) that grounds 'what Plato said' in the philosopher's biography to his self-defence as an explicitly Platonist philosopher (*Apologia*). But at the same time, he extends Platonism beyond 'what Plato said', both in terms of a more expansive Platonic tradition, with pivotal roles assigned to Aristotle (and Theophrastus) in *De mundo* and Socrates in *De deo Socratis*, and also in terms of a more general conception of philosophy, as outlined in discussions of the figure of the philosopher and philosophy itself in the *Florida*. Thus, for Apuleius the Platonist, the impersonation of philosophy often means that his works develop from the details of particular Platonic topics (e.g. cosmology or demonology) toward more general, ethical and protreptic concerns. Taken together – literary production and philosophical identity – we reach the common ground of methodology. How Apuleius writes about Platonism and philosophy across his literary corpus grounds his philosophical identity. For example, Apuleius' methodology in the handbook *De Platone* is not only grounded in the biography of Plato as a mode of what I shall call 'biographical exegesis', but also then expands to other voices beyond Plato's immediate authority, which I shall dub

‘conceptual personification’ and which stretches to the personified figure of Philosophy herself.

Finally, there are two other aspects to Apuleius’ impersonation of philosophy that are closely related: the idea of the impostor and sophist and the role of translation and cultural identity. As we have already seen in Swain’s snapshot, Apuleius’ identity as philosopher and Platonist is explicitly questioned and undermined by his (modern) readers and his claims to being a philosopher and Platonist are understood as the acts of a charlatan or impostor.⁴⁷ Furthermore, given the conditions in which he is writing – during the period of Greek cultural revival commonly known as the Second Sophistic – his very status as a philosopher is debated, especially in terms of the contemporary popularity of the sophist.⁴⁸ What readers have underestimated in this issue is how much Apuleius’ works show an acute awareness of their closeness to this sophistic position. Not only does Apuleius explicitly defend against faulty images of philosophy and the presence of false philosophers in his works, but he also explores how his rhetorical and literary brand of philosophy purposefully verges on the sophistic. As a bilingual author, writing in both Greek and Latin

⁴⁷ Haight (1963) 76, ‘Apuleius wrote about philosophy, but he was not a distinguished Platonist.’ Dillon (1977) 311, ‘What we must always bear in mind is that Apuleius, despite his protestations, is not a philosopher, and his value as evidence is thus dependent upon how well he is relaying to us his source or sources’. Tatum (1979) 105, ‘Nowadays no one would turn to him [Apuleius] for philosophy, unless as the unwitting transmitter of a genuine philosopher’s ideas’. Sandy (1997) 191, ‘Finally, what must be emphasised above all about Apuleius *philosophus* is that his expressly philosophical output is derivative, ranging from now lost translations to adaptations and surveys of earlier, usually Greek works.’

⁴⁸ Elsom (1984) 90, ‘In the *Florida*, Apuleius has made particular play with the overall nature of his persona as a public speaker. The philosopher is just one of the people he might be.’ Hijmans (1987) 396, ‘If we take that word in the sense in which it is used by Apuleius himself and more generally in the second century A.D., there is no reason to deny him the title today any more than was done in later Antiquity or the Middle Ages. It is more to the point to give a sketch of the kind of philosophy Apuleius adhered to, and of the ways in which he expressed his philosophical convictions.’ On defining ‘philosopher’ in the second century CE, see Karadimas (1996) 5–12 and Trapp (2007a). Le Bohec (1994) 61–2, refers to Apuleius’ specific case as exemplifying the ambiguity of the term philosophy in the period. He sees two divisions, one part comprising philosophy as we would now define it: metaphysics, ethics, logic and psychology, the other part a form of encyclopaedic, syncretic ‘cultural studies’.

in Roman North Africa, Apuleius necessarily transforms his impersonation of Plato into a question of translation more generally. Translation is consistently raised in all of Apuleius' works, from rendering Greek philosophical terminology to the use of Roman exemplary narratives. Therefore, Apuleius' Platonism must enact an impersonation of Platonic philosophy, and at the same time emphasise the role of philosophy more generally in contemporary culture in Roman North Africa.⁴⁹

In emphasising the dynamic between Apuleius' Platonism and his more general conception of philosophy in terms of his literary production and cultural identity, we hit upon the most important image of the impersonation of philosophy in the Apuleian corpus, to which I now turn.

Plato's body of philosophy

Towards the end of the biographical opening of *De Platone*, after describing Plato's intellectual adventures after the death of Socrates, Apuleius outlines how Plato created his own unified 'body' (*corpus*) of his philosophy (*Pl.* 1.3.187–8):

nam quamvis de diuersis officinis haec ei essent philosophiae membra suscepta, naturalis a Pythagoreis, rationalis atque moralis ex ipso Socratis fonte, unum tamen ex omnibus et quasi proprii partus corpus effecit et, cum principes harum familiarum impolitas sententias et inchoatas auditoribus tradidissent, eas hic, cum ratione limando tum ad orationis augustae honestissimam speciem induendo perfectas atque etiam admirabiles fecit.⁵⁰

For although these limbs of his philosophy had been gathered from different workshops – natural philosophy from the Pythagoreans, logical and moral from the very fountainhead of Socrates – nonetheless, from them all, he made one body, as if he had given birth to his own offspring, and, while the fathers of these philosophical families had delivered unpolished and unfinished opinions to their audiences, Plato made them perfect and even wondrous, by filing them down with reason and dressing them up in the most honourable form of lofty speech.

⁴⁹ For Apuleius the Afro-Platonist, see Fletcher (2014).

⁵⁰ I follow Barra (1963) 10–18 in adopting the transmitted text, although *dialectica* seems to be an editorial gloss on *rationalis atque moralis*.

In this passage, there are three clear stages to the metaphorical development of Plato's *corpus* of philosophy. The first is the pre-Platonic image of philosophy as comprising 'limbs' (*membra*) that have been gathered from different 'workshops' (*officinae*); the second sees the birth and production of the *corpus* of philosophy by Plato; and the third is the process of the perfection of this *corpus* by a dual process of filing down with 'reason' (*ratio*) and dressing up in 'speech' (*oratio*).⁵¹ Each of these stages contains an internal duality of biological and artistic metaphors for the philosophical *corpus*.⁵² Before the equally biological and artistic metaphor of Plato giving birth to and creating philosophy, we have the interplay between the biological images of 'limbs' (*membra*) combined with the artistic image of the different 'workshops' (*officinae*) of philosophy. The heart of the metaphor and the moment at which biological/natural and artistic/creative metaphors meet is enforced by the ambiguity in the startling phrase *quasi proprii partus corpus effecit*. How should this be understood? To start with the very stark juxtaposition of the metaphorical marker 'as if' (*quasi*) with the possessive 'one's own' (*proprius*) expresses the tension between two ways of translating the phrase. Either it means (i) 'Plato brought forth a body *as if* it were of *his own* offspring (i.e. which he himself had given birth to)', or (ii) 'Plato manufactured a body *as if* it had had a offspring *proper to itself* (i.e. had not been the composite product of other elements).'⁵³ The latter interpretation is supported by the artistic images that follow, in

⁵¹ It is essential to my overall thesis that this particular metaphor is understood in terms of De Man's reading of Nietzsche's *Will to Power* at De Man (1979) 103–18. De Man analyses the dynamic between cause and effect as part of the same rhetorical figure whose roles can be reversed. Gasché (1989) 275: 'The logical priority of cause over effect thus appears to be a function of the rhetorical figure of metonymy or metalepsis by which cause and effect become interchangeable.' In Apuleius, the processes by which philosophy is created through filing down with *ratio* and dressing up with *oratio* cannot be divided into cause and effect; it is a dual-action process, a synergy.

⁵² On the *corpus* of philosophy, see Nancy (2008) with Shapiro (1994).

⁵³ I thank Denis Feeney and John Henderson for debating these translation issues with me. The latter stylishly notes how Apuleius aligns and misaligns the component parts of the production of style to show how to get *oratio* out of *ratio* via the *figura etymologica* of *perfectas fecit* contrasting with the pun between *im-politas* (*in* ~ negative) and *in-choatas* (*in*- ~ into).

how the ‘unpolished and unfinalised opinions’ (*impolitas sententias et inchoatas*) of previous philosophies were ‘made perfect’ (*perfectas fecit*) by Plato’s ‘filing down’ (*limando*) with *ratio* and ‘dressing up’ (*induendo*) in *oratio*. The congruence between life and art and the ultimate predominance of the artistic are features of other biographical narratives of creative production of Plato and other writers, with the most famous example being the tale of Virgil licking the *Georgics* into shape, like a mother bear.⁵⁴ In addition, Apuleius’ image of philosophy as a body is part of the image-repertoire for understanding the divisions within philosophy by contemporary Platonists.⁵⁵ However, the biological interpretation is also hinted at through the earlier reference to *membra* and by the biographical narrative setting of the metaphor. In the crossing of biological and artistic metaphors we see the complexity of any process of authentic authoring of a new (and one’s own) ‘body’ out of a disparate collection of elements ‘authored’ by various others. It is this complexity that Apuleius expands on earlier in his Platonic biography and which shows how deep-seated this image of Plato’s body of philosophy is for him. Earlier in *De Platone* we encounter the body of Plato himself, metamorphosed into a swan in an uncanny dream of Socrates (*Pl.* 1.1.182–3):

somnium etiam Socratis scitum ferunt: nam uidisse sibi uisus est cygni pul-
lum ex altari, quod in Academia Cupidini consecratum est, uolasse et in eius
gremio resedissee et postea olorem illum pinnis caelum petisse, canore musico
auditus hominum deorumque mulcentem. cum hoc Socrates in conuentu
amicorum referret, Ariston Platonem puerum oblaturus Socrati magistro
commodum prosequeretur. quem ubi adspexit ille ingeniumque intimum de
exteriore conspicatus est facie: ‘hic ille erat, amici’, inquit, ‘de Academia
Cupidinis cygnus’.

The following prophetic dream of Socrates is also related: for it seemed to him that he had seen a cygnet fly from the altar (which is in the Academy, sacred to

⁵⁴ Small (1997) links the story of Plato, who ‘curled and re-plaited his dialogues’, retold by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, to Suetonius’ comment on Virgil’s composition of the *Georgics*. See Pater (1885) 41 on the collocation of the ‘labor of the file’ in Plato, Virgil and Apuleius.

⁵⁵ Atticus, fr. 1.20–1 and Numenius, fr. 24.72, on the limbs of Plato. But for Atticus it is Plato who brought the limbs together (as in Apuleius), whereas Numenius refers to Plato’s limbs and his own attempt to make a whole body.

The impersonation of philosophy

Cupid) and settle on the god's lap, and later, as a fully fledged swan, direct its flight to heaven, entrancing the ears of men and gods with its song. And while Socrates was recounting the dream to a gathering of friends, at that very moment Ariston brought the boy Plato to hand him over to Socrates as his teacher. When Socrates saw him and saw from his external appearance his inner talent, he said, 'This is he, friends, that swan of Cupid from the Academy.'

Even though Apuleius marks this biographical anecdote of Plato the swan in Socrates' dream as a well-worn tale (*ferunt*), the fact that this is a popular episode in the biographical tradition of Plato does not mean that Apuleius' particular telling is unremarkable.⁵⁶ Three details specific to Apuleius' retelling are instructive for understanding how the image of Plato the swan prepares the way for Plato's birth of philosophy. First, the physicality of the process of becoming – the cygnet becomes the swan, moving from the lap of Socrates to flying to heaven – relates to three stages in the process of forming philosophy. Second, the aesthetic emphasis on the swan-song which 'entrances the ears of men and gods' connects to the role of *oratio* in the perfection of philosophy. And, third, in a related way, the ethical response of Socrates to seeing Plato re-enacts the split between the internalised *ratio* that files down philosophy in the boy's innate *ingenium* and the externalised *species* of *oratio* that dresses it up.

The metaphor of Plato's body of philosophy is further anticipated in the biographical narrative by the description of Plato's response to his Socratic education (*Pl.* 1.2.185):

uerum cum se Socrati dedisset, non solum ingenio atque doctrina Socraticos ceteros uicit, uerum etiam labore et elegancia illustrauit sapientiam ab eo sibi traditam: labore, quo adserere eam nisus est; elegancia, per quam uenustate et maiestate uerborum ei plurimum adhibuit dignitatis.

But once he had devoted himself to Socrates, he not only defeated the other Socratics in talent and learning, but he also, through hard work and good taste, lit up the wisdom he had received from him; through hard work, he strove to champion it; through good taste, in the charm and majesty of his words, he provided it with the greatest distinction.

⁵⁶ For previous ancient retellings of this tale, see Riginos (1976) 21–4.

With *labor* ('hard work') and *elegantia* ('good taste') Plato transformed Socratic *sapientia* ('wisdom') and, as with the synergy of *ratio* and *oratio* in the image of the body of philosophy, there is a dual-action process of delineating (according to his own arrogation) and supplementation (with eloquent language).⁵⁷ Both Plato's metamorphosis into a swan and his transformation of Socratic *sapientia* prepare the way for the metaphor of the body of philosophy as part of Apuleius' narrative of Plato's biographical development. The biological and biographical are, however, championed by the artistic in other reworkings of this metaphor elsewhere in the Apuleian corpus. This is where we are most struck by the appearance of Apuleius' self-portrait in his biography of Plato.⁵⁸ These correspondences will be explored as they appear in the other works; here discussion will be confined to the *Florida* collection.⁵⁹

In one excerpt preserved in the *Florida* collection, Apuleius briefly lists the numerous exploits of Alexander the Great to then focus on the ruler's careful image control by the artists and sculptors of his day. Apuleius then fantasises about the possibility that Alexander's edict surrounding the uniformity of his noble 'portrait' (*imago*) may be put into effect for philosophy itself and its practitioners (*Fl.* 7.9–11):

quod utinam pari exemplo philosophiae edictum ualeret, ne qui imaginem eius temere adsimularet, uti pauci boni artifices, idem probe eruditi omnifariam sapientiae studium contemplarent, neu rudes, sordidi, imperiti pallio tenus philosophos imitarentur et disciplinam regalem tam ad bene dicendum quam ad bene uiuendum repertam male dicendo et similiter uiuendo contaminarent.

Would that, by a similar example, there were an edict in force for Philosophy that no one should have the temerity to dissimulate her portrait, so that the few good practitioners, proven in the multifariousness of their learning, should contemplate the pursuit of wisdom; but the rude, sordid, and ignorant, who are only philosophers in that they wear cloaks, should not imitate them, nor should they contaminate the royal discipline devised as much for speaking well as for living well by speaking badly and living the same way.

⁵⁷ For *adserolassero* as 'arrogate', see Quint. *Inst.* 1. *pr.* 16, where it can mean both to vindicate (e.g. its claims), so defend, and also to lay claim to something, so arrogate.

⁵⁸ On which, see Nenadic (2007).

⁵⁹ See my discussions of *Mu.* 24 and *Soc.* 4.126–7 in Chapter 3.

The language that Apuleius used earlier in the anecdote to describe the edict that was put in place ‘in case anyone rashly dissimulated the portrait of the king in bronze’ (*ne quis effigiem regis temere adsimularet aere*, *Fl.* 7.6) is explicitly transferred to philosophy, which in turn displaces the ‘king’ (*rex*) as the ‘royal discipline’ (*disciplinam regalem*) of speaking and living well. Thus, as ‘the Alexander’ of intellectual disciplines, Philosophy deserves uniformity and the best practitioners.⁶⁰ While comparison between the rhetorical and plastic arts is commonplace in the Second Sophistic, as Lee notes, Apuleius pushes it further, ‘beyond the surface of a competition between ekphrasis and sculpture, and describes a deeper similarity: the capacity of language to embody virtue, not only in the sense of style, but as an instrument of moral philosophy’.⁶¹ As with so many of his *Florida* pieces, *Florida* 7 starts *in medias res*, so we cannot know how Apuleius used this exemplary anecdote to explain a more general point of interaction between the speaker and his audience; but we can read this passage in terms of Apuleius’ spirited defence of his own philosophical ideals in general.⁶² Furthermore, it is in Apuleius’ fantasy of a unified image of philosophy that we can appreciate the centrality of the artistic and biological image of Plato’s *corpus* of philosophy of *De Platone* to these ideals.

In fact, another *Florida* excerpt helps to bridge these two accounts of the artistic *corpus* of philosophy. In *Florida* 9, Apuleius defends himself against rivals who have attacked him and explains the problems of speaking as a philosopher in an auditorium where, because of his reputation, he has to speak well (*Fl.* 9.8–9):

meum uero unumquodque dictum acriter examinatis, sedulo pensiculatis, ad limam et lineam certam redigitis, cum torno et coturno uero comparatis. tantum habet uilitas excusationis, dignitas difficultatis. agnosco igitur difficultatem meam, nec deprecor quin sic existimetis. nec tamen uos parua quaedam

⁶⁰ To some extent, Apuleius does enact this edict on Philosophy by writing *Mu.*, which redirects its addressee Alexander in the Greek model (pseudo-Aristotle *Peri kosmou*) to his own son Faustinus.

⁶¹ Lee (2001) 200. ⁶² Gaisser (2008) 296.

Introduction

et praua similitudo falsos animi habeat, quoniam quaedam, ut saepe dixi, palliata mendicabula obambulant.

But you scrupulously examine every thing I say, you weigh it up conscientiously, you bring it into line with file and rule sure, and you judge it true by the standards of the lathe and *le théâtre*. That's all the space for apologising that shoddiness gets, and all the difficulty that class faces. Therefore I recognise my difficulty, nor do I plead that you judge on any other terms. However, let no poor and perverse likeness deceive you, since, as I have often said, philosopher-cloak-wearing liar-beggars bump into you on the street.

Here Apuleius juxtaposes the slick alignment of *limamlineam* with the rougher pairing of *tornolcoturno* to reflect on how these analogies both work smoothly and also create a certain amount of friction. The recurrence of the image of impostor philosophers in their *pallium* links this fragment with *Florida* 7, but the disparity of his audience's attention to his words compared with these impostors recalls the artistic language of Plato's *corpus* of philosophy which Plato made perfect by 'filing it down with reason' (*ratione limando*, *Pl.* 1.3.188). Furthermore, the second stage of Plato's creation of philosophy – 'dressing it up in the form of speech' (*orationis...speciem induendo*, *Pl.* 1.3.188) may be compared with the earlier reference to Apuleius' required eloquence when he asks: 'who would allow me to wildly blabber unrefined and blasphemous words like those that spill from the insane?' (*quis incondita et uitiosa uerba temere quasi delirantibus oborientia permiserit blaterare?*, *Fl.* 9.7), while making a sideswipe at his rivals. The dualism – his reputation for eloquence and his audience's projected attention to detail – is glossed later in the lead-in to an anecdote about the sophist Hippias (*Fl.* 9.14):

quo maior religio dicendi habenda est, et quidem non in uno genere studiorum. plura enim mea exstant in Camenis quam Hippiae in opificiis opera. quid istud sit, si animo attendatis, diligentius et accuratius disputabo.

This gives me all the more reason for greater care in my speaking and not only in one genre of study. For there are more works of mine in Literature than there are works of Hippias in his workshops. What that means, if you'd pay close attention, I will discuss with greater diligence and accuracy.

Here his ‘care in speaking’ (*religio dicendi*) is contrasted with exuberance in topics. After the anecdote, he distances himself from Hippias by emphasising how his amazing range of literary productivity has been produced by ‘a single reed’ (*uno . . . calamo*, *Fl.* 9.27). Thus, in this excerpt, Apuleius impersonates the founding dualism in the creation of Platonic philosophy in terms of his own literary production and the creation of his own corpus.⁶³

Yet, beyond his own comments on his work, Apuleius’ impersonation of philosophy as the fusion of his own literary corpus with a Platonic conception of philosophy is best seen by highlighting the wide variety of approaches he adopts towards his master and model. These range from a direct engagement with Platonic texts (e.g. translations, direct quotation and more general citation and paraphrase) to a use of nuanced methodologies for the exegesis of Platonic philosophy (e.g. those grounded in Plato’s biography, the use of personifications of philosophical concepts and forms of protreptic) and more general philosophical positions (e.g. the figure of the philosopher-speaker and the philosopher’s audience). In each case, we will see how Apuleius engages with a variety of genres of contemporary Platonist literature, from commentary traditions, handbooks, treatises, lectures, orations and fictions. To introduce the range of approaches and the level of this engagement, we now briefly consider the most obviously and directly Platonic work of the Apuleian corpus: his lost translation of Plato’s *Phaedo*.

Lost in translation: Apuleius’ Phaedo

While we can explore Apuleius’ direct engagement with Platonic texts elsewhere in the corpus, not only in quotation and paraphrase (e.g. in *De Platone*, *De deo Socratis* and *Apologia*), but also in translations into Latin made by Apuleius (e.g. the passage from the *Laws* that ends *De mundo*), we also know that

⁶³ See [Chapter 4](#) for how the division of the procedures used by Plato to create philosophy – the filing with *ratio* and dressing up with *oratio* – are used in the *Apol.* and *Fl.* to enact the split between the eloquent speaker and his discerning audience.

Introduction

Apuleius wrote a translation of Plato's *Phaedo*.⁶⁴ The following two fragmentary passages are quoted by Priscian:

sic auditurum, sic disciturum, qui melius sit, haec omnia et singula sic agere aut pati, ut patiuntur atque agunt.⁶⁵

In this way, [I was ready] to hear and so learn, how it is better for these things, as a whole and individually, thus to act or be acted upon, insofar as they are acted upon and act.

et causam gignendi ostensurum et immortalitatem animae reperturum.⁶⁶

[I hope] both to demonstrate the cause of becoming and also to discover the immortality of the soul.

While an analysis of these two fragments is fruitful for not only determining just how literally Apuleius translates Plato and how his translation fits into his treatment of related Platonic themes elsewhere in his corpus, it is more important for my purposes here to dwell on the work's more general significance.⁶⁷ The most striking aspect of the presence of this work in Apuleius' corpus is that, aside from a few select passages, translation of Plato's dialogues into Latin does not seem to have been a popular activity in the first centuries of the Roman Empire. Indeed, the most productive comparison for such a translation within the contemporary Greek Platonists would be the commentary tradition. Commentaries on Platonic dialogues, while never reaching the height of the period after Plotinus (fourth–sixth centuries CE), were still a key-stone of Platonist writing in the second–third centuries.⁶⁸ We not only have an anonymous commentary on the *Theaetetus*

⁶⁴ On the *Phaedo* in general, see Gersh (1986) 11–13. Harrison (2000) 23. For a helpful introduction to these and other lost works, see Harrison (2000) 14–36. For an extended discussion of Apuleius' *Phaedo* fragments in terms of Plato's Greek text, the related discussions in *Pl.* and Apuleius' Roman philosophical forebears Cicero and Seneca, see Fletcher (forthcoming).

⁶⁵ Apuleius *Phaed.* Fr. 1 (Priscian GL 2.511.19), which translates a conflation of Plato *Phaed.* 97c–d and 98a–b.

⁶⁶ Apuleius *Phaed.* Fr. 2 (Priscian GL 2.520.20), which translates Plato *Phaed.* 100b, but also recalls 95e–96a.

⁶⁷ I discuss these related issues of literal translation and how the *Phaedo* relates to other Apuleian works, especially *Pl.*, in Fletcher (forthcoming).

⁶⁸ See Dörrie and Baltes (1993) 20–54, 162–226.

which has been dated to this period, but also know of commentaries by Taurus, Harpocraton, Atticus and Albinus. But the *Phaedo* was a central text. The anonymous commentator on the *Theaetetus* refers to a commentary on the *Phaedo* (*In Plat. Theaet.* 47, 45–8, 11 Diels-Schubart), while we know of commentaries by Atticus, Harpocraton, and possibly, Albinus.⁶⁹ Dillon dismisses the bulk of our fragments of Harpocraton as adding nothing to our knowledge of doctrine, but does allow for his significance to the commentary tradition.⁷⁰

In spite of this rich Greek commentary tradition surrounding Plato's dialogues, Latin translation of complete dialogues – like Apuleius' *Phaedo* – is not a well-documented phenomenon in the period.⁷¹ Therefore, on one level, the translation of the *Phaedo* is not only an important marker of the seriousness of Apuleius' Platonic credentials, but is also helpful in differentiating him as a Latinising Platonist within the Greek commentary tradition.⁷² In short, Apuleius' *Phaedo* offers us evidence of a potentially new attitude to the reading of Plato in the Roman Empire of the second century.⁷³ Obviously to explore the far-reaching ramifications of this claim, we would have to account for how Apuleius becomes important for conceptions of the transmission of Hellenised knowledge in the Roman Empire

⁶⁹ Göransson (1995) 68–71. Our evidence for Albinus' commentary on the *Phaedo* comes from Tertullian's *De anima*. Could Apuleius' *Phaedo* have been a mediating link? The *Phaedo* is mentioned in the ordering of the dialogues (*Prologus* 8) as the dialogue to read after the *Alcibiades* and before the *Republic*. Harpocraton produced a commentary on Plato in 24 books and a Platonic lexicon in 2.

⁷⁰ Dillon (1977) 262, 'the remaining references to him in the sources are interesting for the evidence they give of Middle Platonic methods of commentary, but they contain no doctrine of significance'.

⁷¹ Of comparable Latin translations of Plato, we have Gellius and Fronto. The former names one of his (now lost) chapters 'his experiences of trying to translate Plato into Latin' (8.8. cap). He also presents a translation of a part of the *Symposium* (17.20), but resists the attempt to translate passages from the *Gorgias* (10.22). See Holford-Strevens (2003) 204. For a general treatment of Gellius the translator, see Beall (1997).

⁷² I agree with Gersh (1986) 221 n. 22 who notes that it is 'perverse to imagine that he [Apuleius] derives his knowledge of Plato entirely from compendia, since the quotations in the *Apologia*, his own activity as translator of the *Phaedo*, and the independent evidence of the availability of the dialogues during the second century, all point to familiarity with the original texts'. Cushman (1958) 73 n. 11 argues for Augustine's access to Apuleius' translations.

⁷³ Russell (1990) 9.

and general changes in the education of the philosopher.⁷⁴ Furthermore, we would also have to appreciate how Apuleius took up a particular mode of Roman philosophy, in the manner of the trailblazing model of Cicero and his own translating activity, both his partial *Timaeus* and lost *Protagoras* translations and his cultural promotion of Hellenic learning.⁷⁵ However, for the purposes of the present study, the fact that Apuleius translated Plato's *Phaedo* is important because it proves a certain consistency of approach to Platonism in his extant work. As we shall see, in each of the extant works of his corpus, his role as translator, mediator or spokesperson for Plato is pivotal to our appreciation of his Platonism. It is the fact that Apuleius translated Plato that in many ways grounds my discussion of Apuleius' Platonism in terms of his corpus and the impersonation of philosophy: the *Phaedo* translation, then, could be the missing link between his literary production and his philosophical identity as a Platonist.

⁷⁴ On the former idea, see König and Whitmarsh (2009) 17, on the latter, see Sandy (1997) 35.

⁷⁵ On Ciceronian translation of Greek, see Powell (1995). On his translation of Plato, see Poncelet (1957), Puelma (1980), Lambardi (1982) and Lévy (2003). On Ciceronian cultural translation, see Zetzel (2003) and Henderson (2006).

BECOMING PLATO, VOICING PLATONISM

*(De Platone et eius dogmate)***Apuleius' Plato and his Platonism**

Apuleius' *De Platone et eius dogmate* ('On Plato and his doctrine') understandably occupies a central place in any study of Apuleius' Platonism.¹ The majority of discussions of this work have focused on what it can tell us about Apuleius' brand of Platonic doctrine either within Middle Platonic traditions or as background for Platonic interpretations of the *Metamorphoses*.² Such doctrinally focused approaches have typically been grounded in a projection of what was being taught in the Academy during Apuleius' studies there and in a comparative approach to Alcinous' *Didaskalikos*.³ While the fortunes of these approaches have fluctuated, what has remained consistent in discussions of *De Platone* is an emphasis on its lacklustre literary status as a 'dry' handbook.⁴ While it is the ostensible aim of this chapter to read *De Platone* as a text, I shall not be claiming that it ever reaches the literary heights of other Apuleian works. Instead I wish to show how a focus on its narrative in terms of Apuleius' methodological choices affirms

¹ As shown by the fact that Moreschini (1966) (on *De Platone*) is the core of Moreschini (1978) (on Apuleius' Platonism in general).

² For the former, see Moreschini (1966) and (1978) 51–132; Dillon (1977) 306–38; Gersh (1986) 215–328; Hijmans (1987); Göransson (1995). For the latter, see O'Brien (2002) 1–26.

³ Harrison (2000) 198 has a helpful comparative table of contents of both works.

⁴ The stylistic aridity of this work in particular has been fully registered. Moreschini (1966) 9, 'la secchezza del manuale'; Dillon (1977) 309, 'bald and colourless style [of *PL*]'; Moreschini (1978) 51, 'l'aridità del manuale'; Walsh (1982) 777, 'By contrast [to *Soc.*] *De Platone et eius dogmate* ... is written in the more restrained style appropriate to a summary of philosophical teaching composed for a reading public.' Opsomer (1998) 19, '[Apuleius'] tracts on Platonic philosophy are disappointingly dry, technical and elementary handbooks, that draw heavily on scholastic traditions.' Harrison (2000) 294, who emphasises the literary aspects of Apuleius' works of 'philosophical exposition', emphasises 'De Platone's lack of literary ambition'.

the conception of Apuleius' Platonism, as outlined in the previous chapter, as an aesthetically charged impersonation of philosophy. We already started to read *De Platone* in this way, by comparing the image of Plato's creation and birth of a body of philosophy as a fusion of Apuleius' literary and philosophical ambitions across his corpus. Indeed, other readers have found that the easiest way to incorporate *De Platone* into the rest of the Apuleian corpus, especially with the *Metamorphoses*, would be through an emphasis on the biography.⁵ Yet, as we shall see, the biography cannot be so readily separated from the two-book exegesis of Platonic natural and ethical philosophy ahead. Indeed the claim of this chapter is that Apuleius' Platonism as articulated in *De Platone* hinges on the way in which the impersonation of philosophy in the biography (i.e. the formation of the Platonic *corpus* in terms of the dynamic between *ratio* and *oratio*) continues into the handbook's main narrative in the form of a core methodology which I shall call 'biographical exegesis'. From this core methodological foundation, there spring two other methodological variations – conceptual personification and authorial protreptic – which we find traces of in the biography. But before discussing this nuanced methodological range of *De Platone*, I must first ground my approach in previous discussions of this work in terms of its brand of Platonic doctrine, both as it has been understood in terms of Apuleius' education in Athens and in comparison with Alcinous' *Didaskalikos*.

Academics and Platonists

In the previous chapter we saw how Apuleius' statements about his philosophical education in Athens in the *Florida* have been fundamental to a doctrinal approach to the handbook. These general references to his time in Athens, coupled with his explicit mention of his 'Academic training' (*meditationibus Academicis*, *Fl.* 15.26), have triggered considerable discussion

⁵ Barra (1963) and Nenadic (2007).

as to who his teachers were in the Academy.⁶ Dillon goes so far as to claim that Apuleius' 'value as a philosophical source is dependent on when he was studying in Athens and whom he studied with'.⁷ But hope for details confirming when and with whom he studied in Athens is not to be fulfilled by Apuleius.⁸ In fact, given that the language of the references to Athens in the *Florida* evokes the rhetorical image of the body of philosophy and his own literary corpus, Apuleius turns the 'fact' of his Academic education into a trope. This rhetorical tactic by Apuleius has obvious far-reaching consequences for how he fits into the picture of the Academic scene of the second century CE and takes his place in Middle Platonism. At one time in the study of the development of Platonic doctrine from the early Academy to Plotinus, Apuleius was associated with the 'school of Gaius' on the basis of suggested doctrinal similarities between his *De Platone* and the *Didaskalikos*, then linked to Gaius' pupil, Albinus.⁹ By positing a shared school background for the authors of these handbooks, both similarities (one shared source) and differences (multiple shared sources) can be accommodated. Yet in spite of the impact of this theory being undermined by a revisiting of the authorship question of the *Didaskalikos* (now acknowledged to be written by an otherwise unknown Alcinous, and not Gaius' Albinus), the focus on the specifics of Apuleius' Platonic training in Athens still dictates any approach to *De Platone*. What this dogged insistence on this grounding of *De Platone* in Apuleius' education reveals

⁶ Glucker (1978) responds to doubts about the existence of a functional Academy in Athens during this period by citing this reference in its favour. Nonetheless, there is no way of telling who Apuleius trained with. Dillon (1977) 338 gives three options for Apuleius' teachers: Taurus, Sextus of Chaeroneia, or, perhaps, the author of Pseudo-Plutarch *De fato*. On this issue, see Sandy (1993) 167–73 and (1997) 27–36. On the doxographical relationship between *De fato* and *Pl.*, see Sharples (2003).

⁷ Dillon (1977) 308 continues: 'and that time we can locate with reasonable probability in the early 150s, a time at which the chief figure in Platonism at Athens was certainly Taurus'. On the focus on Apuleius' stay in Athens to explain his Platonism, see also Glucker (1978) 139–41. On the general debate surrounding the so-called 'School of Gaius', see Moreschini (1966) 15, Dillon (1977) 266–7; Rocca (1978) 229 with n. 24, Harrison (2000) 5 with n. 19, White (2002) 212 with n. 19.

⁸ See Glucker (1978) 140–1, for Apuleian reticence on this subject.

⁹ The thesis of Sinko (1905), on which see the comments by Beaujeu (1973) 56–9; Moreschini (1978) 55–61; Gersh (1986) 222–7 ('possible'); Hijmans (1987) 435; Roskam (2005) 378 with n. 88.

is a commitment to reading this author's corpus in terms of the trajectory of an imagined literary career, viewing it as a work of Apuleius' youth as lecture notes written up by an earnest student in the Academy.¹⁰ Even the generally more accepted approach, that it is the work of Apuleius' maturity, in which he passes on the fruits of his life of Platonic learning to his son/pupil Faustinus, seems still to trace back to this formative education.¹¹ If discussion is to be moved from the potentially unanswerable question of *who* Apuleius' Platonic teacher was in the Academy in terms of the *what* of Apuleius' Platonism, much greater attention needs to be paid to the *how*. At the heart of this issue is a debate in the period between the identification of philosophical educators as either Academics or Platonists.

Pivotal to our understanding of 'who's who' in the Athenian Academy in the early second century is an inscription conferring honorary rights upon several members.¹² In two other inscriptions, appearing on the same monument, the philosophers are described as 'Platonists' (*Platonikoi*). The presence of the term 'Platonist' alongside members of the Academy implies a distinction between a Platonist philosopher and an Academic philosopher in this period. Aside from one mention in Cicero, the term 'Platonist', as opposed to the member of the Academy, is a surprisingly late invention.¹³ The history of the Platonic Academy was consistently played out according to a tension

¹⁰ Sinko (1905), 47; Beaujeu (1973) xxix–xxxiv and 58; Moreschini (1978) 14–15 and 19; Roskam (2005) 378 with n. 85.

¹¹ Dillon (1977) 310; Gersh (1986) 220; Hijmans (1987) 414; Sandy (1997) 4; Harrison (2000) 179–80; Roskam (2005) 378 with n. 87.

¹² Göransson (1995) *Testimonia* 7.

¹³ Cicero *ND* 1.73, on which see Brittain (2007). For Platonism as a later phenomenon, see Glucker (1978) 206–25. Boys-Stones (2001) 101 decides calling Philo of Larissa, Antiochus of Ascalon and Eudorus of Alexandria 'Platonists' not only goes against their description as Academics in antiquity but 'makes historical nonsense'. It is also a significant distinction in modern scholarship. Brittain (2007) 297 refers to the work of 'Hellenistic Academics'. But how helpful are Hellenistic school tensions in the case of the dogmatic Platonists of the second century? I accept the following approach adopted by Boys-Stones (2001) 102, 'So what is Platonism? The failure of attempts to explain it as an outgrowth of the Hellenistic schools might suggest that it is not in terms of Hellenistic school philosophy that we should be approaching the question.' In other words, there may be implicit Stoic arguments in Middle Platonic texts, but no Middle Platonist explicitly appropriates Stoicism *qua* Stoicism.

between scepticism and dogmatism, which had as its basis a fundamental dispute over the nature of the Platonic dialogues and their imagined message.¹⁴ Yet it was only in the second century CE that Platonism meant an adherence to Plato's authority, beyond that of a school founder into that of a semi-divine spiritual leader.¹⁵ In Apuleius' day, the figure of the Platonist seems to emerge out of a form of dogmatism extolled by certain leaders of the Academy such as Gaius and Taurus, both of whom have been linked with Apuleius and his philosophical training in Athens.¹⁶ For example, Apuleius' association with Gaius has suffered setbacks given that it was based on the false ascription of the *Didaskalikos* to his pupil Albinus and on now disputed similarities with *De Platone*.¹⁷ In addition, any linkage with Taurus relies heavily on pure speculation in the claim that Gellius and Apuleius were students in Athens at the same time and thus Taurus' students.¹⁸ Yet if the move to consider Apuleius' methodology in *De Platone* can impact on this debate as well, even if his association with either Gaius or Taurus cannot be affirmed, we can still ask how Apuleius' handbook relates to the kind of 'Platonising' work the Academy was producing at this time.

Our information on the teachings of Gaius comes from his pupils Albinus, an unnamed teacher of Galen, and one Bacchius, possibly the tutor to Marcus Aurelius.¹⁹ For the teachings of Taurus, we have to rely on Gellius' testimony.²⁰ While Gaius left his teachings through the writings of his students (namely Albinus' *Outlines of Platonic doctrines from the classes*

¹⁴ See Tarrant (1985); Opsomer (1998); Bonazzi (2003); Brittain (2007).

¹⁵ Boys-Stones (2001) 103 critiques the idea that the authority of Platonism is comparable with the authority of the Hellenistic schools by stating 'Stoics did not argue from the pronouncements of Zeno'.

¹⁶ For a clear introduction to these Platonic educators and their status as such, see Tarrant (2007); but he is at pains to declare that Apuleius was 'not a Platonist educator by profession' (460).

¹⁷ Göransson (1995).

¹⁸ Dillon (1977) 308; Holford-Strevens (2003) 23; Sandy (1997) 27–36.

¹⁹ Göransson (1995) 38 contests the link with Marcus Aurelius, although that would have been suggestive given the role of Claudius Maximus in the *Apologia*. For an account of Claudius Maximus' authority from a legal and socio-cultural reading of the trial, see Noreña (2013).

²⁰ On Taurus in Gellius, see Holford-Strevens (2003) 90–7.

of *Gaius*), Taurus' output is much wider and is representative of other genres of Platonist writing in the period.²¹ Yet in spite of these differences of approach, what both Gaius and Taurus represent is the re-emergence of a dogmatic tendency in Platonism after Plutarch.²² That is not to say that there were no adherents of Academic Scepticism (Favorinus of Arles is the obvious exception); nonetheless the main thrust of second-century Platonism was to argue for the unified doctrines of Plato.²³ For example, the fact that Taurus wrote commentaries on several Platonic dialogues implies an interest in an exegesis of Platonic doctrine that underpins the master's authority in his writings.²⁴ Such recourse to Plato's authority shows how Platonists in this period emphasised the rhetorical aspect of this new Platonism.²⁵ Perhaps the greatest impact of this rhetoric was the grounding of authority in Plato's texts and the resulting negation of the doctrinal developments of contemporary Platonic teachers. Tarrant writes of Taurus (original emphases):

It will be noticed that I have not discussed Taurus' *doctrine* in its own right. Of course he *has* doctrine, but our sources are not such as show its systematic exposition, much as is the case with Plutarch.²⁶

Tarrant's aligning of Taurus with Plutarch in terms of lacking 'systematic exposition' somewhat simplifies the question of the textual production of a dogmatic Platonism in the mode of an Academic Scepticism. This is unnecessary, since the limitations in our sources for evidence of doctrinal development among Platonists need to be explained less as a rejection of

²¹ He wrote polemics reconciling Plato and Aristotle against the Stoics as well as commentaries on the *Gorgias*, *Republic* and *Timaeus*, on which see Tarrant (1996) and Gaisser (2008) 164.

²² The sceptical Academy did still have its advocates – such as Favorinus, who 'was a "practising" sceptical Academic 200 years too late' (Brittain (2007) 301).

²³ Holford-Strevens (2003) 72–8; Ioppolo (1993); Bonazzi (2003) 158–70; Brittain (2007) 301–4.

²⁴ Boys-Stones (2001) 103 sees the rise of the Platonic commentary tradition in this period as a direct result of the new approach to Plato in terms of working out what 'Plato meant'. On the dogmatic approach of Gaius and so Albinus, see Proclus *In Timaeum* 1. 340.23–341.4 = Göransson (1995) Testimonia 3.

²⁵ Boys-Stones (2001) 104 recognises that the period can be discussed by 'shifts in rhetoric as easily by changes in philosophical approach'.

²⁶ Tarrant (2007) 460.

'systematic exposition', but more as the product of the rhetorical force of the new Platonism. In other words, how Platonists are bent on emphasising the impersonation of the master's voice regardless of doctrinal innovation. In other words, Taurus' commentaries on Platonic dialogues can be understood as 'systematic exposition' of Platonic doctrines, and we could even speculate that Albinus' *Outlines of Platonic doctrines* may be not just the title of the student's notes, but the very title of Gaius' original class.²⁷ This rhetorical approach to the new Platonism in the Academy as an impersonation of the Platonic voice may also explain the particular range of works written in the period, and why commentaries on individual dialogues, Platonic biographies and introductory handbooks were prevalent in the Middle Platonism of the second and third centuries CE.²⁸ Apuleius' work fits well into this new Platonism, not only in his translation of Plato's *Phaedo*, but also in how *De Platone* fuses the genres of biography and handbook. Indeed, this approach can further make sense of the relationship between *De Platone* and Alcinous' *Didaskalikos*.

De Platone has consistently been grouped together with Alcinous' *Didaskalikos*, which was written either in the first or second century CE.²⁹ This association of the two texts dates back to the Platonic revival of the Renaissance and continued throughout later systematising approaches to Platonic philosophy.³⁰ As handbooks of Platonism, it is understandable why neither has been read for any other purpose than for

²⁷ Göransson (1995), however, 48 argues against this claim.

²⁸ On the trend of overviews of Plato's teaching in the period, see Dörrie and Baltes (1993) 60–2, 235–43.

²⁹ For arguments for dating the *Didaskalikos* in the second century, see Dillon (1993) xii–xiii, Donini (1994) 5057–8. Sedley (1996) 300–1 n. 2 is more sceptical, and does not rule out a first-century date. Boys-Stones (2005) 205 n. 4, observes that the issue of dating is vital for understanding the philosophical climate when the text was written, especially in the debate on Sceptical and Dogmatic Platonism. As we shall see, this issue is pivotal in reading Apuleius' text.

³⁰ Latin translations of the *Didaskalikos* by Pietro Balbi in 1460 and Ficino before 1464 were first published as appendices to Apuleius' works. See Dillon (1993) xli. Johann Jacob Brucker based his survey of Plato in his monumental *Historia Critica Philosophiae* (1742–4) on the 'pure' sources of Cicero, Apuleius and Alcinous. Brucker states that Apuleius' *De Platone* may be read with great advantage together with Alcinous' and Albinus'. For a brief discussion of Brucker, see Glucker (1996) 395.

understanding either the status of Platonism in the Academy in the Roman Imperial period or the finer points of Middle Platonic doctrine.³¹ Their similarities and differences in these terms have been catalogued and debated *in extenso*, mainly with an eye to finding or denying a shared source or sources.³² However, a more recent approach has highlighted how doctrinal differences could be related to differences in pedagogic strategy and methodology.³³ This developing focus on the methodological choices of Platonic handbooks ties in with the new rhetorical brand of Platonism developing in the Academy. Before looking at the methodological similarities and differences between *De Platone* and *Didaskalikos*, let me offer some background to this development of interest in Middle Platonic methodologies.

Middle Platonic methodologies

Dillon introduces his canonical study of the Middle Platonists with a distinctly unflattering analogy. He states that this period in the history of Platonism, from roughly 80 BCE to 220 CE, ‘seems fated to remain in the position of those tedious tracts of the Mid-Western United States through which one passes with all possible haste, in order to reach the excitements of one coast or the other. In Platonism, likewise, one tends to move all too hastily from Plato to Plotinus, with, at most, a perfunctory glance at those vast tracts of Academic scholasticism that lie between the two, and which were of such basic importance in the intellectual formation of the latter.’³⁴ After Dillon’s mapping of the terrain, one way in which studies of Middle Platonism have developed in a less doctrinal, doxographical direction has been through consideration of methodological traits common to ‘Platonist’ authors. Given the important role of rhetorical innovation in the presentation of doctrine in the

³¹ See Dillon (1977), Göransson (1995), Sharples (2003). Boys-Stones (2001) omits both from his reimagining of Middle Platonism.

³² Sinko (1905). Göransson (1995).

³³ Roskam (2005); Boys-Stones (2005). ³⁴ Dillon (1977) xiii.

Platonism of the Academy in this period, rather than doctrinal innovation, a focus on Middle Platonic methodology is required in order to address Apuleius' Platonism, and this today is finally receiving the treatment it deserves.³⁵ In his discussion of Philo of Alexandria, Runia emphasises the methodological features that unite purveyors of Middle Platonism. First, he recognises a privileging of the Platonic text itself, rather than any esoteric teachings. Second, as an extension of this privileging, Middle Platonists tend to utilise methods of exegesis and systematisation to conflate one or more Platonic texts so as to yield an overall impression and mount a true exposition of the master's teaching. Third, and this point seems at first less methodological than historical, Middle Platonists were eager to show how Plato, as a Pythagorean, was himself a source of primitive wisdom, while other schools of philosophy were merely variations on or distortions of the true Platonic doctrine.³⁶ But this is in fact a third methodological claim married to the others, in that it shows that the very mode of textual exegesis pre-empts dissension and claims of primacy among competing schools.

If we take Runia's list of methodological features of Platonism and briefly return to Apuleius, we can see some important correspondences. In terms of the Platonic text, we not only know that Apuleius translated Plato's *Phaedo*, but can also see through his quotation and paraphrase of specific Platonic texts across the corpus that he grounded his Platonism in direct engagement with the texts of his master. The second trait of exegesis is at the heart of Apuleius' main work of Platonism – *De Platone* – which grounds the master's teaching in a prefatory biography enabling a form of biographical exegesis to run throughout the handbook. Furthermore, the conflation of Apuleius' own voice as exegete with Plato's own is also a major strategy of impersonation in the *De deo Socratis* and the *Apologia*. Finally, the emphasis on Plato's use of Pythagoras as a way of stressing the fundamental primacy of his thought is

³⁵ Runia (1986); Boys-Stones (2001); Trapp (2007a); Baltussen (2007) and (2008).

³⁶ Runia (1986) 486–8.

evident not only from Apuleius' focus on a Pythagorean stage to Plato's development in his biography of Plato in *De Platone* and his construction of the body of philosophy including a Pythagorean *membrum*, but also at work in his discussions of Pythagoras and Pythagoreanism elsewhere in the corpus (especially *Florida* 15).³⁷ Therefore Apuleius adheres to the methodological traits of contemporary Platonism across his corpus. But he also adds a further dimension, that, although missing from Runia's schema, is intimated in contributions from Boys-Stones and Trapp. That is, this focus on Middle Platonic methodology may productively be opened out to throw light on how different genres are utilised in the period for specifically Platonic ends.

Boys-Stones' work in demarcating the boundaries between Academic and Platonic philosophy in the Imperial period explores the major questions of Platonic dogmatism and authority through its conception of primitive wisdom alongside developments in Stoic, Jewish and Christian philosophy.³⁸ His analysis stresses methodologies over doctrine and thereby highlights the role of genres of polemic and apology. While Trapp goes even further than Boys-Stones in adopting a 'Hellenistic' comparative approach to Platonism, he too is interested in going beyond doctrinal differences – with Platonism and the other schools – into the methodological debate that itself extends into discussion of how philosophy interacted with mainstream, cultural education or *paideia* of the Second Sophistic in terms of genres of writing. While the distinction between 'school philosophy' and 'popular philosophy' in the Roman Empire is no new division, Trapp advances the debate considerably by tracing the school/popular interface to the methodologies of the philosopher himself.³⁹ Trapp notes that:

³⁷ On these passages within the general domain of Pythagoreanism and Middle Platonism, see Lee (2005) 135–8.

³⁸ Boys-Stones (2001).

³⁹ For example, Manning (1994) articulates this dichotomy on the basis of understanding the difference between Cynicism and Stoicism.

The model of the *philosophos* as a practitioner not confined to contexts of formal instruction, but ranging freely over all kinds of private and social situation, is developed in a number of Imperial-period texts.⁴⁰

Trapp then quotes passages from Plutarch and Maximus of Tyre where both argue that there is not one particular 'occasion' for philosophy, but, like life, it is all-consuming and in both cases it is Socrates who represents the image of the ideal philosopher. However, the emphasis on the variety of genres of Platonic writing stressed by Boys-Stones is missing from Trapp's analysis. If this was an issue for Trapp, he would have been obliged to make a distinction between the diversified corpus of the literary polymath Plutarch and the more homogeneous orations of Maximus. Plutarch's claim to variety in philosophical teaching can be seen in practice in the amazing diversity and range of his literary corpus. Yet the claims of Maximus in his *Orationes* are less than compelling given that he employs such a limited array of literary experimentation in his writings.⁴¹ Therefore, claims of different 'occasions' for philosophy have different resonances coming from polymathic Plutarch than they can from monolithic Maximus.

In terms of methodological variety across his corpus, Apuleius shares more with Plutarch than with Maximus.⁴² Yet the idea of methodological variety within individual works in the corpus is also key to an understanding of Apuleius' Platonism. The best place to start the study of methodology in Apuleius, in light of its centrality to his Platonism and its adherence to the Platonist contexts, is *De Platone*. Yet, ironically, in spite of Apuleius' methodological variety across his corpus, he has been lost to this new wave of scholarship on the history of Platonism because the methodology of *De Platone* has

⁴⁰ Trapp (2007a) 21.

⁴¹ Perhaps one reason for this is that a figure like Plutarch causes considerable problems for anyone trying to reconcile him to the schemata of Runia for the methods of Middle Platonists. While a work like *On the Creation of the Soul in the Timaeus* supports the text-based approach, what do we do with the explicit Platonism of works like *On the Daemon of Socrates* or *On Isis and Osiris*?

⁴² For Apuleius and Plutarch, see Walsh (1981) and Hunink (2004b).

been ignored.⁴³ For example, Boys-Stones' omission of *De Platone* and Alcinous' *Didaskalikos* from his discussion of Platonic methodologies shows that he cannot factor in the vital methodological choices at stake within these very different representatives of the handbook genre.⁴⁴ Roskam, on the other hand, has offered three 'essential components' of Apuleius' conception of philosophy in his reading of *De Platone*.⁴⁵ His first component is that Apuleius' philosophy implies 'learning' (*eruditio*); second, that through its learning one can live the good life – favouring virtue over external advantage. Finally, philosophy includes a rhetorical aspect – speaking well and living well – the *uir bonus dicendi peritus* syndrome. These 'essential components', Roskam argues, mean that Platonism offers the most attractive philosophy for Apuleius. He sees that Plato offered the most excellent level of philosophical learning (*eruditio*); the master himself offered examples of high moral virtues and showed literary talent and admirable eloquence. In conclusion, Roskam states: 'Apuleius' choice for Platonic philosophy, then, is based on a complex interaction between his own ideal of philosophy and the position of Plato.'⁴⁶ And this distinction is crucial for how we understand the methodological differences between *De Platone* and the *Didaskalikos*.

Despite omitting *De Platone* and the *Didaskalikos* from his book, Boys-Stones elsewhere discusses the methodological choices of the latter. Yet, in making his argument, he imagines the objection of over-interpretation, stating:

But perhaps, it will be objected, this is just *too* subtle – too devious and complex for it to be at all plausible as a reading of what is, after all, an introductory handbook.⁴⁷

The limitations of the handbook genre immediately give way to the author, Alcinous, when, in the appended footnote, Boys-Stones writes: 'There are those who would add that Alcinous is

⁴³ The main exception is Roskam (2005).

⁴⁴ Trapp, on the other hand, by focusing exclusively on Apuleius as author of *Pl.* and, briefly, *Soc.*, cannot see that Apuleius, in contrast to Trapp's Plutarch, contributes to varieties of Platonic teaching beyond the handbook.

⁴⁵ Roskam (2005) 379–80. ⁴⁶ Roskam (2005) 380.

⁴⁷ Boys-Stones (2005) 229.

not skilled enough as a writer.⁴⁸ As readers of Apuleius' *De Platone*, typically arriving via the *Metamorphoses*, we could argue that we have precisely the opposite problem. But the best way to expand the discussion of Middle Platonic methodologies will be to appreciate how the differences between the works can articulate the difference between their authors.

Even the most cursory readings of these texts in terms that reach beyond doctrinal correspondence and divergence could highlight the chief methodological similarities and differences between them. Both texts offer a variety of approaches to their Platonic content, ranging from direct quotation of Plato's words and phrases to the more general paraphrases of Platonic philosophy.⁴⁹ Yet *De Platone* foregrounds the role of Plato in the exegesis far more than isolated moments of quotation, because it presents what 'Plato said' as its core methodology.⁵⁰ Indeed, as I shall argue in the next section, this methodological choice is dictated by the presence of the opening biography and should therefore be understood as a 'biographical exegesis'. Conversely, the *Didaskalikos*, in spite of Platonic quotation and paraphrase, preserves a crucial distance from the doctrine expounded thanks to the constant presence of the figure of the author as exegete. The *Didaskalikos* has been described as evoking 'the atmosphere of the lecture-hall', and this is achieved 'by the use of ἐπομένως ["consequently" (adv.)] and ἀκόλουθος ["following after"] or the verbal adjective in -έον ["it must"]', which has the convenience of indicating where a fresh topic begins'.⁵¹ There are, first, those uses of terms in which the

⁴⁸ Boys-Stones (2005) 229 n. 29.

⁴⁹ Indeed their use (and abuse) of Platonic words and phrases and their tendency to paraphrase have been at the forefront of consideration. See Dillon (1989), Whittaker (1989).

⁵⁰ See Laird (1999) 126–31 on the problem of *ipsa uerba*. His model (126) with 'Smith' could work with 'Plato'. Witt (1937) 2 (referring to the *Didaskalikos*) '...by no means all the utterances are meant to pass as the *ipsissima verba* of the Master himself'. On the general absence of such 'labelled' references to Plato in Apuleius' epoch, see De Lacy (1974) 6.

⁵¹ Witt (1937) 111 refers to nine instances of ἐπομένως and ἀκόλουθος. In Whittaker (1990) they are: 8.162.24; 14.169.43; 18.173.33; 19.174.7; 25.178.33; 27.181.6; 28.181.40; 30.184.12. I refer to all below. Those not referred to by Witt are 28.181.19 and 28.181.37. On the verbal adjective in -έον, see Witt (1937) 111 n. 3, where he refers to eight examples.

text refers to its own order of exposition ('the next point, class, is the following').⁵² This self-referential pedagogic mode ranges from a gentle jussive mode⁵³ ('let us now discuss the Forms') to an authoritarian, imperative mode⁵⁴ ('we must next move on to ethics'). If we compare this to *De Platone*, in spite of how other voices, including the authorial, flesh out the core biographical exegesis, Apuleius' pedagogic voice is subsumed under that of Plato. The same Plato whose life is recounted in the opening biography is the constant reference point for the exposition of his doctrine.

If Apuleius' *De Platone* and Alcinous' *Didaskalikos* are to be appreciated for their methodological choices, along the lines of recent scholarship on Middle Platonism, then there must be a revitalisation of the traditional debates surrounding its relationship to the trends of Platonic teaching in the Academy and the forms of Platonic writing in the period. For Apuleius this means explaining how his methodological choices are grounded in a purposeful conflation of the genres of biography and handbook. Before expanding on the methodology of *De Platone* at work, given that I claim that the core 'Plato said' mode is grounded in the biography of Plato, it is necessary to discuss how biographical exegesis begins in the biography itself.

⁵² A good example of this mode is 8.162.24–9: 'Consequent on these topics, let us turn to a discussion of first principles and doctrines of theology, taking our starting point from the primary elements, and then descending from these to examine, first, the origin of the world, and finally the origin and nature of man. So let us first discuss matter. (μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα ἐπομένως περὶ τῶν ἀρχῶν τὲ καὶ τῶν θεολογικῶν λέγωμεν θεωρημάτων, ἄνωθεν ἀπὸ τῶν πρώτων ἀρχόμενοι καὶ ἀπ' αὐτῶν κατῴντες καὶ ἐπισκοποῦντες τὴν τοῦ κόσμου γένεσιν, τελευτώντες δὲ εἰς ἀνθρώπων γένεσιν καὶ φύσιν. καὶ πρώτον γε περὶ ὅλης λέγωμεν.) On the *corpus* of philosophy, see Nancy (2008) with Shapiro (1994).

⁵³ For this genial mode, see the example above and also 7.160.43, 'This will suffice as a sketch of dialectic. Next let us discuss theoretical science.' (τὸ μὲν δὴ διαλεκτικὸν ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ὑπογεγράφθω· ἐξῆς δὲ περὶ τοῦ θεωρητικοῦ λέγωμεν.). Gibson (1997) would call this 'sociative'.

⁵⁴ For the more authoritarian mode, see 11.166.37, 'We must turn now to the subject of what is called physics, making our start as follows.' (ἐπὶ δὲ τὸν καλούμενον φυσικὸν τόπον ἐξῆς χωρητέον ἐντεῦθεν ποθεν ἀρξαμένους); 23.176.6, 'We must next speak of the soul, resuming our discussion at the following point, even if we seem to be repeating ourselves.' (ἐξῆς δὲ περὶ ψυχῆς ῥητέον, ἐντεῦθεν ποθεν ἀναλαβόντας τὸν λόγον, εἰ καὶ δόξομεν παλλυλογεῖν); 27.179.35, 'We must next deal summarily with the ethical doctrines of that man.' (ἐξῆς δ' ἐπὶ κεφαλαίων περὶ τῶν ἠθικῶς τῷ ἀνδρὶ εἰρημένων ῥητέον).

The Platonic *Life*

To appreciate the pivotal significance of *De Platone*, both for the rest of the Apuleian corpus and for its methodology in terms of traditions of Middle Platonism, we must understand the internal dynamic of the text as a whole. The best way of doing so is to highlight how Apuleius' methodology in the body of the work – the two books discussing Platonic natural and ethical doctrine – is literally dictated by the opening biography. Apuleius' *Life of Plato* grounds the handbook to come in terms of the methodology of biographical exegesis. In other words, the biography dramatises Plato's development in terms of the emergence of the authoritative voice that will thereafter dictate his own philosophical doctrines. Conversely, Apuleius' *Life of Plato* must also in some ways be understood as pre-empting the exegetical drama of the Platonic handbook to come. This is most clearly seen in how the dynamic between various phases of Plato's development pave the way for key doctrinal issues developed in the body of the work. Apuleius' biography offers a trajectory for the Platonic philosopher: his pre-philosophical origins and education, his conversion to philosophy, and the philosophical researches and teaching that ensues.⁵⁵ For Plato specifically, there are two marked phases of this trajectory, with Socrates playing the pivotal role between them. The first phase is Plato's pre-Socratic origins and education, ending with his philosophical conversion and successes as Socrates' pupil, while the second phase is initiated by Socrates' death and Plato's Pythagorean research-based travels, and concludes with his teaching and, ultimately, the already discussed birth and creation of a *corpus* of philosophy. In this way, the biographical text enacts a drama of Plato's intellectual development that peaks with the birth of a specifically Platonic philosophy which is then practised in the biographical exegesis that follows.

In addition to the core impersonation of philosophy that is grounded in Apuleius' markedly Platonic biography, the

⁵⁵ One manuscript (F) outlines this trajectory by calling the work *De habitudine doctrinae et natiuitate Platonis philosophi*. On which, see Reynolds (1983) 17–18.

exegetical drama that follows calls for methodological variations that expand on Plato's fundamental authority. Instead of constantly and consistently maintaining the direct link between what Plato said and his biography, Apuleius' exegesis splinters into a variety of voices. These include conceptual personifications operating within Plato's philosophical system as well as the authorial protreptic of the exegete Apuleius himself. Furthermore, just as the biography pre-empts the Platonism to come, so too does this dynamic between the core biographical exegesis of Plato's voice and the chiming in of other voices that operates in the body of *De Platone* operate in the biography. The emergence of Plato's philosophical voice in the biography is specifically ensured by other philosophical presences, especially of Socrates. But before embarking on my reading of the biography, I must first explain my conception of biographical exegesis in the current climate of approaches to Platonic writing in the Roman Empire.

From biodoxography and ipsedixitism to biographical exegesis

In spite of not being pressed for its methodological significance, the fact that Apuleius' *De Platone* combines the genres of biography and the introductory handbook of philosophical doctrines can be understood in terms of the novel genre of 'biodoxography'. The term biodoxography was first coined to describe the genre of Diogenes Laërtius' *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* in general, and his third book on Plato in particular.⁵⁶ Nonetheless, this novel generic term, while it is entirely suited to *De Platone*, has not been used to describe the work. The reason for this must be that the two genres that comprise Apuleius' work are treated separately. Not only has the biography been ignored in terms of the doctrinal approach to Middle Platonic doxography, but the biography has been conveniently detached from the doxographical body to underpin a discussion of Apuleius' philosophical self-presentation

⁵⁶ Gigante (1986) and Warren (2007). This could also be expanded to the later *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*.

elsewhere.⁵⁷ Therefore, before we consider the limitations of the term biodoxography for *De Platone*, it is worth first dwelling on the internal, generic identities projected onto the work by this hybrid generic category: biography and doxography. Asking how the opening biography and the ensuing doxography fit into their own generic classifications will aid our appreciation of the overarching genre of biodoxography and indicate that Apuleius' text does not, ultimately, fit into this generic category.

One result of the hybrid genre of *De Platone* is that Apuleius' biography of Plato is generally overlooked in histories of ancient biography.⁵⁸ Nonetheless it remains central to discussion of the biographical traditions surrounding Plato.⁵⁹ Apuleius' is one of several biographies of Plato that survive from antiquity, but the earliest to survive for us intact and, while there are other sources of information for specific moments of Plato's life, there are just five extant 'traditional' biographies that cover it whole.⁶⁰ The popular tradition of Plato's students writing biographies of their master is mostly lost and remnants of these works can only be gleaned from later biographies.⁶¹ It is generally acknowledged that Apuleius

⁵⁷ Harrison (2000) 203–8.

⁵⁸ Browning (1982) 723, 'Of other [than Suetonian] forms of biography, such as the life of the philosopher, there is no trace in the Latin west, though the Greek east provided excellent examples in the *Life of Plotinus* by Porphyry (c. 234–c. 305) and the *Lives of the Sophists* by Eunapius of Sardis (c. 345–c. 414).' There is a passing mention in Leo (1901) 54–5, but only as part of a general account of Plato's *Vita* not as a stage in the development of the genre. No mention in Stuart (1928), Dorey (1967), Talbert (1978), Burrige (1992), Sonnabend (2002), Kraus (2005), Hägg (2012). Moreover, it is ignored by studies of Platonic biography: for example, no mention in Lamberton (2001).

⁵⁹ The classic case is the unacknowledged use of Apuleius' biography by the commentary on Lucan 10. 180 (*Commenta Bernensia*, pp. 321–3 Usener), on which see Klibansky and Regen (1993) 34, Stramaglia (1996) 142 n. 64. On the Platonic biographical tradition in general, see the extensive comparative study of Riginos (1976).

⁶⁰ Riginos (1976) is based on these five, which are those of Philodemus in the *Academicorum philosophorum index Herculanensis*, Diogenes Laërtius 3.1–47, Olympiodorus in *Platonis Alcibiadem commentaria*, the *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*, Hesychius of Miletus' *Onomatologos* and the *Suda*.

⁶¹ Riginos (1976) 5, 'Biographies of Plato ... were written by his own students including Speusippus, Xenocrates, Erastus, Asclepiades, Philip of Opus, and possibly Aristotle.' Both Erastus and Asclepiades wrote memoirs of Plato (Πλάτωνος

utilised one of these earlier biographies as his source for Plato's life, most likely that of Speusippus, whom he explicitly mentions.⁶² But the idea that Apuleius had one source is far from compelling: for example, Philodemus' earlier biography in his history of the Academy has been shown to have been based on several sources, each used for different parts of the biography.⁶³ Discussion of the composition of Apuleius' biography is joined by some conjectures as to the purpose of the text which has generally been seen as written with newcomers to Plato and his philosophy in mind.⁶⁴ Yet this discussion of purpose has not developed into an account of what kind of biography Apuleius is writing. This omission can be accounted for by the fact that its presence as only part of a text means that it can easily be missed by those searching for biography, especially as the main comparative text utilised (the *Didaskalikos*) has no equivalent biographical introduction. Even accounting for the questionable status of biography as a genre that makes its author into a 'biographer', he has a less than secure position as such, especially in relation to writers who are now approached through their roles as biographers.⁶⁵ Finally, the genre of philosophical biography in general has an unstable place in a specifically Latin biographical tradition, where *uiri illustres* from other spheres of life take primacy. While philosophers were supposedly included in several collective biographies, such as *De Viris Illustribus* of Nepos, Santra, Hyginus

ἀπομνημονεύματα), Xenocrates' work was called *περὶ τοῦ Πλάτωνος βίου*. Philip of Opus may have called his work *περὶ Πλάτωνος*. Schmutzler (1974) 50 also mentions Hermodorus' *περὶ Πλάτωνος συγγραφὴ*.

⁶² *Pl.* 1.2.183. For helpful summaries of these works, see Dörrie and Baltes (1993) 235–6; Schepens (1998) 199–200.

⁶³ Listed in Dorandi (1991) 29–30. On the biography of Plato in Philodemus, see Gaiser (1983).

⁶⁴ Sinko (1905) 178, 'novis auditoribus vita Platonis enarrabatur', quoted by Barra (1963) 5 n. 5.

⁶⁵ Even if there are genres of biography in antiquity, there are, in fact, *no* biographers. Nepos, Suetonius, Plutarch, Philostratus never just wrote biography. Compare Plutarch and his 'moral' *βίοι* in their relationship to his Platonism. On which, Brenk (1998) 402, 'as a famous Platonic eschatologist, he probably also understood *βίος* like the master – a type of life freely chosen, meritorious hereafter either for punishment, reincarnation, or for achieving the *τέλος*, the intellectual and blessed vision'. This is most dramatically seen in his *Life of Antony*.

and Suetonius, none of these texts survive for us to compare with Apuleius' Platonic biography.⁶⁶

Nor has Apuleius' biography of Plato been classified within a specific type of biographical tradition.⁶⁷ There have been several ways of classifying ancient biographical traditions by form and function, genre and mode.⁶⁸ With regard to the didactic lives of philosophers, five types have been identified.⁶⁹ Type A, as a pattern to copy; type B, to dispel a false image of the teacher; type C, intending to discredit a teacher; type D, to indicate the 'living voice' to be found in the period after the founder; type E, as validating and/or providing the hermeneutical key for the teacher's doctrine.⁷⁰ Aside from type C, Apuleius' biography participates in all the other types. Plato is set up as a model to follow by the Platonist Apuleius, the specific treatment of the Sicilian journeys is in defence of Plato as teacher, while the living voice and the hermeneutic key are all found in the compositional deployment of the biography as introduction to the exegesis.

These last two types (D and E) lead into the question of the biodoxographical genre. While there have been remarkably few attempts within Apuleian scholarship to link the Platonic biography to the doctrinal exposition that follows, the issue of whether the Platonic biographical tradition too incorporated doxography is a much debated topic. Aristotle, Speusippus, Xenocrates, Philip of Opus, Erastos and Asclepiades all wrote variations on the so-called *Peri Platōnos* ('On Plato') genre. These works were not completely restricted to the biographical, 'but also contain doxographical passages in which certain points of Plato's doctrine are explained at considerable length'.⁷¹ Since none of these works survive intact, the only

⁶⁶ Of Suetonius' *De philosophis* we have an index with three names, Varro, Nigidius Figulus and Seneca. On moralising in *Nepos*, see McCarty (1974).

⁶⁷ Schmutzler (1974) is a partial exception.

⁶⁸ Leo (1901) describes three types: 1) encomium; 2) Peripatetic; 3) Alexandrian. Talbert (1978) 1620 supplements with 4) popular or romantic life. There are two criteria: 1) formal arrangement; 2) degree of historical reliability (Talbert (1978) 1620). Momigliano (1993) disagrees with Leo's classification.

⁶⁹ According to Talbert (1978) 1620–3.

⁷⁰ Talbert (1978) 1623–5 connects types A–C and E with rulers.

⁷¹ Schepens (1998) 200 refers to Hermodorus of Syracuse and Xenocrates.

works in which the links between the biographical and the doxographical can be traced are those of Apuleius and Diogenes Laërtius:

The label ‘biographer’ reveals only half the picture in the case, for instance, of Xenokrates and H[ermodoros]: they would seem to have been early predecessors of the likes of Apuleius and Diogenes Laërtios who, in their works, also combined biographical and doxographical information (βίος καὶ ἀρέσκοντα) about their subjects.⁷²

Focus on *De Platone* and Diogenes Laërtius’ third book to reconstruct the strictly biographical tradition has meant that scant attention has been paid to the ways in which Apuleius’ text actually recounts Plato’s life, as well as its relationship with his doctrine.⁷³ One reason behind this, I would argue, is a misuse of the term doxography to explain what Apuleius is doing. Using the term doxography to describe the body of *De Platone* has several potential dangers. In terms of philosophical historiography, doxography has a very specific meaning. There are three broad types of doxography: first, the study of lost doctrines of philosophers or schools through the writings of intermediaries;⁷⁴ second, the systematic presentation

⁷² Schepens (1998) 201. See also Mejer (1978) 62–93 and Mansfeld (1986) 304–12.

⁷³ Contrast Diogenes Laërtius, for whom there has at least been some work on his technique as a biographer, his use of sources and his own relationship to the philosophers he discusses, for example, Mejer (1978). The major difference between Apuleius’ Platonic biography and Diogenes’ work in their biographical approach is that the latter presents the philosophical biography not only as a series of *topoi* and not as a chronology, but also by the technique of composition based on the excerption of sources. On this biographical mode in the case of Zeno of Citium, see Hahm (1992). Nevertheless, this does not prevent the reader from putting the pieces together. See Hahm (2002) 32, ‘In Diogenes’ biography Zeno serves as a model not only of what it is to *be* a Stoic, but of what it is to *become* a Stoic’. Hahm continues, regardless of the way in which the composition of the biography operates through *topoi* and citation, by arguing that: ‘Diogenes portrays Zeno as undergoing a radical change from maritime trader to student of philosophy, and finally to teacher and founder of a school.’ While Apuleius does conscript his readers in the process of interpretation in his biography, via set *topoi* of Plato’s name, origins, education, conversion to philosophy, study, travel and legacy, as well as the reference to Speusippus as a source, he still dictates a chronologically directed, partisan biographical portrait of Plato.

⁷⁴ Mainly the pre-Socratics and Hellenistic philosophers. See Schofield (1991) 1, Mansfeld (1999).

of a philosopher's or school's extant doctrines;⁷⁵ and third, a conflation of the two: 'a kind of history of philosophy which presents a summary of the doctrines and philosophical position of a sequence of philosophers'.⁷⁶ The first is doxography proper, ascribed to Theophrastus, and historically associated with natural philosophy.⁷⁷ The third is the *hairesis* genre, which is very much the realm of Diogenes Laërtius. It is the second that we have in *De Platone*. The odd use of the term doxography for 'Darstellung der Lehre', to which *De Platone* obviously belongs, means that it has reached a wider range of texts.⁷⁸ In recent definitions of doxography this genre has been generally ignored or undervalued.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, the genre offers invaluable information on the state of philosophical movements and education in later periods. This is especially the case with the *On Plato* writings of the early Academy and it is through this lens that Apuleius' *De Platone* should be viewed. One implication of this generic affiliation is the transition from the term doxography to exegesis. The 'systematic exposition of a school's doctrines' written by a member of that school and including the biography of the school's founder makes this exposition more rhetorically charged than a dispassionate doxography. The peculiar rhetoric of such a form of exegesis can be appreciated when we consider the conception of biographical exegesis in the so-called *ipsedixitist* mode, for which Pythagoreans were particularly renowned.⁸⁰ Yet Pythagorean *ipsedixitism*, where

⁷⁵ See the 'modern' examples used by Runia (1999) 34. See also Mansfeld (1999) 17 on Diels and this genre of doxography, 'The genre he derives from Theophrastus, which deals with collections of briefly formulated tenets from a systematic point of view, should not right away be put on a par with the often extensive descriptions of a single philosopher, or school, such as we find in the individual books of Diogenes Laërtius' treatise, or in Cicero.'

⁷⁶ Runia (1999) 34. ⁷⁷ Mansfeld and Runia (1997) xiii n. 1.

⁷⁸ Boys-Stones (2001) viii states that he is concentrating 'away from Platonists who are only known to us through doxographical fragments or works', and thus will not consider Albinus, Alcinous, Gaius or Apuleius. Algra (2004) highlights this reference to 'doxographical fragments and works' as an odd way of using the term doxography.

⁷⁹ Rorty (1984).

⁸⁰ A clear, albeit hostile, account of this particular exegetical mode is given in Cicero's *De natura deorum* (ND 1.10) in which Cicero clearly favours a method of disputation

the master's *auctoritas* serves as philosophical argument, is a far cry from the exegetical methodology Apuleius employs in *De Platone*. The difference is based on how the biography of Plato that grounds Apuleius' exegetical methodology not only introduces, but even demands, a more nuanced version of this particular exegetical mode. How we move from *ipsedixitism* to the methodology of biographical exegesis adopted in *De Platone* may be enlightened by a brief theoretical interlude.

In his brief preface to *Plato and Platonism*, which would be his last work, Walter Pater introduces his readers to three related aspects of the book ahead.⁸¹ First, he explains the genesis of the book as a series of lectures, published with the aim of reaching a wider audience. Second, he states that by Platonism he means Plato's own doctrine and not any later tradition of so-called Neo-Platonism. Third, he highlights the connection between the biographical author (Plato) and his writings in his method of presenting his philosophy (Platonism). These aspects of the book are related by a clear trajectory, moving from Pater's role as teacher and lecturer on Plato, via the traditions of Neo-Platonism, to Plato's own life and works and the connection between them. This trajectory is not only instrumental to the work itself, but also ties Pater's final work to the rest of his corpus, especially the imaginary portraits of *The Renaissance*, *Imaginary Portraits* and *Marius the Epicurean*.⁸² While, conversely, some scholars have re-evaluated *Plato and Platonism* by pointing to its marked differences from his earlier literary works,⁸³ in fact, it is Pater's focus on the connection between Plato's life and thought that hints at an important aspect of his own particular brand of aesthetic criticism.

Pater's writings have been described as 'hovering somewhere between theoretical criticism and imaginative creation'.⁸⁴

that employs (Socratic) 'reason' (*ratio*) and neither extreme of complete subjectivity nor the unexamined *auctoritas* of Pythagorean *ipsedixitism*. On *auctoritas* in this passage, and in general, see Sedley (1997).

⁸¹ Pater (1893) v.

⁸² See Saunders (2010) 29–70 for this genre of imaginary portraiture.

⁸³ Ward writes: '*Plato and Platonism* is by far Pater's most impressive work.... He was never a writer of fiction.', quoted in Shuter (1971) 411.

⁸⁴ Shuter (1971) 411.

Nowhere is this ‘hovering’ seen more clearly than in Pater’s approach to the genre of biography. For Pater, biography demands the aestheticisation of the biographical subject as filtered through the imagination of the biographer.⁸⁵ As Pater writes in his preface to *The Renaissance*: ‘in aesthetic criticism the first step towards seeing one’s object as it really is, is to know one’s impression as it really is, to discriminate it, to realise it distinctly . . . What is this song or picture or engaging personality presented in life or in a book to *me*?’⁸⁶ Pater’s focus on the ‘engaging personality’, furthermore, goes some way to explaining his approach to Plato’s biography in *Plato and Platonism*. Unlike Apuleius’ *De Platone*, Pater’s *Plato and Platonism* is not prefaced by a biography of Plato, but begins with chapters that take up biographically inspired moments in Plato’s philosophical education, to include chapters on Heraclitus (‘Plato and the Doctrine of Motion’), Parmenides (‘Plato and the Doctrine of Rest’) and Pythagoras (‘Plato and the Doctrine of Number’). This approach ensures that the biographical figure is not simply quarantined in an introductory biography but permeates the whole work.⁸⁷ In this way, the Pater of *Plato and Platonism* offers an expansion of the imaginary portrait into the area of theoretical criticism. Instead of asking what Plato’s ‘engaging personality’ means to him (Pater), he asks what it means to his exegesis of Plato’s philosophy. This move, for Pater, ultimately enacts a direct link between aesthetics and ethics, as in the final section of *Plato and Platonism*, when Pater evokes the ‘sensible fact’ of character and characteristics through conceptions of the colour in the face:

And Platonic aesthetics, remember! as such, are ever in close connexion with Plato’s ethics. It is life itself, action and character, he proposes to colour.

How does the ‘close connexion’ between Platonic ethics and aesthetics relate to the ‘close connexion’ between Plato’s works and his biography, or to his ‘self’ as ‘presented in his own writings’? To answer this question of how Pater’s conception of

⁸⁵ On the genre of imaginary biography, see Klock (2007).

⁸⁶ Pater quoted by Klock (2007) 125.

⁸⁷ On Plato’s education, see Shuter (1997) 82.

Platonic ethics is focused on a particularly aestheticised form of ethics, and to further transition from *ipsedixitism* to biographical exegesis, the work of Emmanuel Levinas may offer some guidance.⁸⁸

Levinas' main work is focused on making ethics a 'first philosophy' (replacing metaphysics) and a particularly helpful tool in doing so is the procedure of exegesis. Levinas describes exegesis as the process of making a text into a source of teaching, in contrast to what he dubs 'critical philology':

This exegesis made the text speak; while critical philology speaks *of* the text. The one takes the text to be a source of teaching, the other treats it as a thing.⁸⁹

But beyond this straightforward definition, exegesis for Levinas was at the heart of his project of making ethics his 'first philosophy'. The Talmudic scholar, in giving an exegesis of a sacred text, came face to face with the spirit of the letter, as this encounter with the sacred text parallels the encounter with the Other. This, in short, comprises an ethical exegesis. In his reading of Levinas, Cohen describes the 'characteristics or dimensions' of Levinesian 'ethical exegesis' as (1) concrete and productive integrity of spirit and letter; (2) pluralism of persons and readings; (3) virtue, or existential, self-transformative wisdom; and (4) authority, or the renewal of a living ethico-religious tradition.⁹⁰ These characteristics can be shown in Cohen's following explanation of exegesis:

Exegesis . . . is text interpretation not through *explanation* derived from *objective* context alone, but through *understanding* derived from the text's as well as the subject's own *subjective* context.⁹¹

The bridge between Pater's approach to biography and Levinas' ethical brand of exegesis is this insistence on the subjective engagement with the object, whether an 'engaging personality' or a sacred text. It is this particular collocation of Pater's and Levinas' ideas that I find instructive for reading

⁸⁸ Shuter (1997) 46.

⁹⁰ Cohen (2005) 38.

⁸⁹ Levinas quoted in Cohen (2001) 240.

⁹¹ Cohen (2001) 239 (emphasis in the original).

De Platone beyond the so-called genres of biodoxography and *ipsedixitism* and in terms of what I dub biographical exegesis.⁹²

My description of Apuleius' methodology in *De Platone* as biographical exegesis conflates Pater's incorporation of the subjective experience (i.e. engagement) into the aesthetic evaluation of the object (i.e. the 'engaging personality') with Levinas' ethical exegesis that demands an understanding of the text derived from both the text's (i.e. the Other) and the subject's subjective context. The significant qualification for both Pater and Levinas in terms of biography and exegesis is the combination of the subject and object in their subjective interpretive context. For Apuleius, since the methodological core of *De Platone* is a direct extension of the biography of Plato, this mode is not the extreme *ipsedixitism* of Cicero's Pythagoreans, but a more nuanced voice of the philosopher as 'engaging personality' whose intellectual trajectory we have just been following.⁹³ Conversely, the grounding of the exegesis in this kind of biographical text allows for the intervention of further voices. It turns out that Apuleius does not merely tell us what 'Plato said', but stages a lively drama of impersonation that reflects on *how* he said it and what he *meant* by saying it. In other words, Apuleius' biography of Plato actually continues into the scene of teaching of the exegesis. In what follows, I shall offer a reading of the biography that shows how the general methodology, narrative structure and specific details of the exegesis are pre-saged in the text.

Origins and education

The first half of Apuleius' biography is devoted to explaining Plato's extraordinary origins, pre-philosophical education,

⁹² My use of Levinas here and throughout my discussion of Apuleian exegesis is inspired by Boys-Stones (2001). The most detailed discussion of *De Platone*, in itself, is still Moreschini (1978) 51–128, which in turn is based on Moreschini (1966). For the role of Pater between Nietzsche and Levinas, see Martindale (2005) 164. On the intersection of ethics and aesthetics in the *Met.*, see Kahane (2007).

⁹³ We may compare the stark biographical exegesis that opens *Soc.*, but which turns into a multi-faceted drama of exegesis in the rest of the lecture.

conversion to philosophy at the hands of Socrates and his subsequent philosophical education (*Pl.* 1.1.180–1.2.185):

Platoni habitudo corporis cognomentum dedit; namque Aristocles prius est nominatus. ei Ariston fuisse pater dictus est; ceterum Perictione, Glauci filia, mater fuit: et de utroque nobilitas satis clara; nam Ariston pater per Codrum ab ipso Neptuno originem duxit, a Solone sapientissimo, qui legum Atticarum fundator fuit, maternus deriuatus est sanguis. sunt qui Platonem augustiore conceptu prosatum dicant, cum quidem Apollinis figuratio Perictionae se miscuisset. mense etiam, qui apud Atticos Thargelion dicitur, natus est, die qua apud Delum Latona fertur Apollinem Dianamque peperisse. pridie Socraten genitum accepimus. somnium etiam Socratis scitum ferunt: nam uidisse sibi uisus est cygni pullum ex altari, quod in Academia Cupidini consecratum est, uolasse et in eius gremio resedisse et postea olorem illum pinis caelum petisse, canore musico auditus hominum deorumque mulcentem. cum hoc Socrates in conuentu amicorum referret, Ariston Platonem puerum oblaturus Socrati magistro commodum prosequabatur. quem ubi adspexit ille ingeniumque intimum de exteriore conspicatus est facie: ‘hic ille erat, amici’, inquit, ‘de Academia Cupidinis cygnus’.

talīs igitur ac de talibus, Plato non solum heroum uirtutibus praestitit, uerum etiam aequiperauit diuum potestatibus. nam Speusippus, domesticis documentis instructus, et pueri eius acre in percipiendo ingenium et admirandae uerecundiae indolem laudat, et pubescentis primitias labore atque amore studendi imbutas refert, et in uiro harum incrementa uirtutum et ceterarum conuenisse testatur. ex isdem genitoribus Glaucus et Adimantus ei fratres fuerunt. doctores habuit in prima litteratura Dionysium, at in palaestra Aristonem Argis oriundum, tantosque progressus exercitatio ei contulit, ut Pythia et Isthmia de lucta certauerit. picturae non aspernatus artem, traegodiis et dithyrambis se utilem finxit. iamque carminum confidentia elatus, certatorem se profiteri cupiebat, ni Socrates humilitatem cupidinis ex eius mentibus expulisset et uerae laudis gloriam in eius animum inserere curasset. et antea quidem Heracliti secta fuerat imbutus. uerum cum se Socrati dedisset, non solum ingenio atque doctrina Socraticos ceteros uicit, uerum etiam labore et elegantia illustrauit sapientiam ab eo sibi traditam: labore, quo adserere eam nisus est; elegantia, per quam uenustate et maiestate uerborum ei plurimum adhibuit dignitatis.

Plato received his name from the constitution of his body, as before he was called Aristocles. It was said that his father was Ariston; moreover, Perictione, daughter of Glaucus, was his mother; and from both his nobility was sufficiently illustrious. For his father, Ariston, was descended, via Codrus, from none other than the god Neptune; while his maternal blood flowed from the most wise Solon, who was the founder of the Athenian laws. There are some who say that Plato was the fruit of an even more exalted conception, since an apparition of Apollo had intercourse with Perictione. Also, he was

born in the month called Thargelion among the Athenians, the day on which, at Delos, Latona is said to have delivered Apollo and Diana. We learn that Socrates was born the day before. The following prophetic dream of Socrates is also related: for it seemed to him that he had seen a cygnet fly from the altar (which is in the Academy, sacred to Cupid) and settle on the god's lap, and later, as a fully fledged swan, direct its flight to heaven, entrancing the ears of men and gods with its song. And while Socrates was recounting the dream to a gathering of friends, at that very moment Ariston brought the boy Plato to hand him over to Socrates as his teacher. When Socrates saw him and saw from his external appearance his inner talent, he said, 'This is he, friends, that swan of Cupid from the Academy.'

In this way and from such origins, Plato not only exceeded the virtues of the heroes, but even equalled the powers of the gods. For Speusippus, having access to family documents, praises the boy's shrewd talent in perception and his naturally admirable modesty, and relates how the first-fruits of his youth were steeped in hard work and passion for study and he testifies that the reinforcements of these and other virtues coalesced in the man. His brothers Glaucus (*sic*) and Adeimantus were from the same parents. His teachers were Dionysius in elementary education; but Ariston, a native of Argos, in the gymnasium, and the practice brought him such great progress that he competed in wrestling at the Pythian and Isthmian games. He did not spurn the art of painting and he was able to compose tragedies and dithyrambs. And now, encouraged by his confidence in poetry, he would have wanted to compete in a poetic contest had not Socrates driven from his mind the baseness of the desire, and taken care to implant in his soul the glory of true praise. And previously he had been initiated into the sect of Heraclitus, but once he had devoted himself to Socrates, he not only defeated the other Socratics in talent and learning, but he also, through hard work and good taste lit up the wisdom he had received from him; through hard work, he strove to champion it; through good taste, in the charm and majesty of his words, he provided it with the greatest distinction.

Throughout the first half of the biography, Apuleius maintains a basic division between Plato's innate origins, as dictated by his physical characteristics, parentage, lineage and natural 'talent' (*ingenium*) on the one side, and his pursuit of education, his passion for study and his hard work on the other. This division appears both in his general education and his philosophical education at the feet of Socrates. In both topics there is a projected development of Plato's agency as he moves from auspicious beginnings to philosophical star pupil. Apuleius' discussion of Plato's origins in terms of inherited and learned qualities is followed by an emphasis on his philosophical

development as dramatised by both Socrates' guidance and Plato's own agency. By the end of the section, Apuleius has Plato appropriate the wisdom of Socrates as his own through a combination of 'hard work' (*labor*) and 'good taste' (*elegantia*).⁹⁴ Yet, even though Plato's agency develops throughout the biography, culminating in the image of his creation of the *corpus* of philosophy, there are also glimpses of the Plato to come in his origins, especially as interpreted by the uncannily prophetic dream of Socrates. In short, Apuleius adds a synergy to the clear trajectory of the biographical subject. This synergy works out a straightforward division, between inherited origins and self-fashioned education, that permeates Apuleius' biography as it debates the question of Plato's agency at the heart of Apuleius' narrative of his life and work.⁹⁵

Furthermore, this interactive dynamic operates at the level of the narration itself. As with any biographical narrative there is a mixture of focus on the agency of the biographical subject (i.e. what Plato did) and other voices, from the accounts of sources (i.e. X says Plato did Y or more generally 'it is said that Plato did Y') to the authorial voice of the biographer, Apuleius. This mixed narrative operates especially at the level of structure and selection, but it is also apparent when Plato and his actions are described.⁹⁶ Since the methodology of biographical exegesis that permeates *De Platone* is grounded in the biography, the question of how the biographical narrative elucidates this agency is vital for reading the methodology back onto the biography itself. In terms of how the narrative works, the way in which his origins are described gives a glimpse of the innate *ingenium* of the philosopher to come, as well as his burgeoning agency. If we consider Apuleius' opening discussion of Plato's

⁹⁴ This division between *labor* and *elegantia* pre-empts the metaphor of the *corpus* of Platonic philosophy that appears later in the biography, where we are told how there is a basic dynamic between what Plato inherited (the 'limbs' (*membra*) of previous schools) and what he did with those *membra* in making philosophy perfect through force of 'reason' (*ratio*) and 'speech' (*oratio*).

⁹⁵ See later in this chapter how the dynamic between origins and education is played out in the two passages of the exegesis.

⁹⁶ For the use of narratology in biography, see Benton (2009) 18–34.

name, lineage and the dream of Socrates, we can see how this works.

The text of *De Platone*, as we have it, opens with a curiously blunt statement on how Plato got his name.⁹⁷ How Plato came to be called Plato, and not by his given name, Aristocles, is a standard topic in the biographical tradition.⁹⁸ But Apuleius' is the only extant biography to give it pride of place at the beginning.⁹⁹ What is the impact of Apuleius' choice of opening? We could explain this choice by thinking about the genre of the work: a person's name is a good place to start any biographical text.¹⁰⁰ For sure, we could generate far more traction by following up how Apuleius emphasises naming throughout his corpus, especially in the *Metamorphoses*.¹⁰¹ But in addition to these possibilities, I would argue that by beginning *De Platone* with Plato's name-change, Apuleius marks out a particular aspect of Plato that is productive in Apuleius' biographical exegesis to come. In introducing the fact of the name-change at the outset, this text necessarily begins from the position of the omniscient biographical narrator.¹⁰² This may seem an obvious point, but the case of Plato's name-change is a part of Plato's biography that pivots between the biographical subject's agency and the biographer's authorial control. And this

⁹⁷ On whether this is actually the beginning of the work as written, see Harrison (2000) 196, on 'the lost preface'. Even if the text did not begin *Platoni habitudo*, the intrinsic prefatory-preliminary significance of this naming for the Platonic biography is important, as we shall see. The *Commenta Bernensia* begins with Plato's parents: *Plato Aristonis et Perictiones filius*.

⁹⁸ On Plato's name, see Notopoulos (1939); Riginos (1976) 35–8; Sedley (2003) 21–3.

⁹⁹ The other extant biographies of Plato, aside from Diogenes Laërtius, have equally interesting points of departure. Olympiodorus has a rallying-round approach; Hesychius sensationalises, 'Plato the philosopher is said to have never undergone even once the marriage-state or sexual intercourse'; Diogenes starts with the name 'Plato', but withholds his discussion of the name until later (3.4).

¹⁰⁰ On how to begin a biographical text, see Benton (2009) 19–21.

¹⁰¹ If this is the opening, it goes against the view that the 'technique of late-naming is characteristic of Apuleius' (Tatum (1979) 27 n. 5). For naming in the *Met.*, see Schlam and Finkelppearl (2000) 196–8. In addition, see Keulen (2000), Repath (2000), Krabbe (2003) 1–53, O'Brien (2004). For naming and power, on no account miss Henderson (2001) 196 n. 34. Only Krabbe (2003) 11 with n. 44 refers directly to the name-change of *De Platone*.

¹⁰² Dowden (1982) 421, 'Names of characters cause problems in anything other than omniscient narration [...] [i]n a first-person narrative, a name, like anything else, is a fact to be discovered; and this leads to a certain hesitance in presenting the name.'

issue of agency becomes still more pressing when we come to consider the role of Socrates later in the biography and the emergence of Apuleius' authorial presence in the two-volume handbook. Before dwelling on this idea, however, a comparison between Apuleius' approach to Plato's name-change and other approaches is required.

Plato's name-change has been explained in various ways by ancient authors, typically emphasising either his broad physique or his breadth of literary style.¹⁰³ In terms of these two options, Apuleius appears to follow the first by grounding Plato's name-change in his physique by stating that it was the 'constitution of his body' (*habitus corporis*) that literally 'gave' (*dedit*) Plato his name.¹⁰⁴ In addition to such readings, Sedley has proposed that we view the name-change 'philosophically', viz. in light of the etymological theory proposed in Plato's *Cratylus*.¹⁰⁵ Sedley claims that the argument that Plato (= 'Broad') bests Aristocles ('Best fame') because names 'if they are to do their job of singling out things or people, must connote intrinsic features like strength and breadth, not such accidents as reputation'.¹⁰⁶ If we now run with Sedley's idea and fast-forward to near the end of the biography, we can see how the moment of agency in enacting an appropriate name-change is extended into Plato's philosophy in terms of a pun on the word *corpus*. We learn how Plato 'made' (*effecit*) the *corpus* of philosophy 'as if his own offspring/of its own begetting' (*quasi proprii partus*), and then, taking down the previously 'unpolished and unfinalized opinions' (*impolitas sententias et inchoatas*) of previous philosophers, 'he made them perfect and even wondrous' (*perfectas atque etiam admirabiles fecit*). Now the *corpus* that gave Plato his name at the beginning of the

¹⁰³ Breadth of style is suggested by Diogenes Laërtius. Sedley (2003) 21 finds breadth of intellect 'a little better'.

¹⁰⁴ The phrase *habitus corporis* is used in various ways elsewhere in *De Platone* and across the corpus. At *Pl.* 1.15.212 it is used of the physiognomic composition of the body. In the *Apologia* (14.6), when discussing why mirrors are much better for representing a person than art, Apuleius refers to the *varias habitudines corporis* that only the mirror can capture during a person's development from boyhood to old age. On the question of agency and naming, see the opening of Dickens' *Great Expectations*: 'So, I called myself *Pip*, and came to be called *Pip*.'

¹⁰⁵ Sedley (2003). ¹⁰⁶ Sedley (2003) 22–3.

biography and the *corpus* of philosophy that Plato created towards its end need not be the same. In fact, by opening the biography this way, Apuleius prophesies a trajectory for its subject, from being given a name by his 'body' (*corpus*) to making and perfecting a 'body' (*corpus*) of philosophy. Thus, either the name-change is Plato's passive nickname derived from his *corpus* or presages his agency in the creation of the *corpus* of philosophy or, doubtless the most persuasive reading, both at the same time. Apuleius' uses of the term *corpus*, then, not only combine broadness of body and breadth of style of writing, but also permit Sedley's reading, since the act of the name-change comes to be interpreted in terms of the *corpus* of Platonic doctrine to come. In short, Apuleius' choice to open his biography of Plato with his change of name bridges inherited and learned attributes while presaging the biographical exegesis to come.

If Plato's name-change evokes the tension between Plato's internal, inherited attributes and the self-fashioning of the philosopher (and philosophy) to come, can such a reading also work for Apuleius' discussion of Plato's lineage, his parents, grandparents and the fantastical story of his Apolline birth? If Apuleius begins his biography by signposting how Plato renounces his inherited name for one that showed more individual qualities, projecting his own fame for the unification of the philosophical *corpus*, why does Apuleius then proceed to confirm Plato's inherited and unexamined 'nobility' (*nobilitas*) and quasi-divine genealogy?¹⁰⁷ This can be explained by carefully tracking the way in which Apuleius develops his narrative in discussing Plato's lineage. He begins by stating that Plato's *nobilitas* was 'sufficiently illustrious' (*satis clara*) as based on his parentage and their lineage. Not only does the claim that his father's genealogy stems from the god Neptune confer on Plato a near heroic status, but his mother Perictione's link to Solon 'the most wise' (*sapientissimus*) produces a pointer to the philosopher in the

¹⁰⁷ Mason (1983) 141–2, 'In his other works [than the *Met.*], Apuleius takes the moral view that virtue, not birth or status, makes for true nobility'; Mason then proceeds to refer to Crates in *Fl.* 22 and *Apol.* 22.

making.¹⁰⁸ Finally, Apuleius reports what some people ‘say’ (*dicant*) of Plato’s ‘more exalted conception’ (*augustiore conceptu*). This refers to the motif that an ‘apparition’ (*figuratio*) of the god Apollo had intercourse with Perictione, conceiving Plato, which enhances and makes sense of the auspicious timing of Plato’s birth in the month of Thargelion, the same month when Leto once gave birth to the twins Apollo and Diana. This Apolline nature expands the *nobilitas* of his father’s divine genealogy, yet the mother’s side is expanded by the introduction of Socrates into the equation. The date of Plato’s birth, like his lineage, is split between his divine origins and his future philosophical education since Socrates was also born (and in fact died) during Thargelion. In fact, it is to be Socrates’ uncanny and prophetic dream that will conclude this first section on origins, balanced between Plato’s innate abilities and his future philosophical glory. So Apuleius’ narrative weighs up the philosophical significance of Plato’s origins (Solon in his mother’s family-line and his birthdate in relation to Socrates) at the same time as it indulges Plato hero-worship as a divine figure through a parallel genealogy. As with Plato’s name-change, there is no straightforward division between Plato’s innate nature and his intellectual development. Moreover, it is the biographer Apuleius’ toggling between differing versions of Plato’s genealogy that enacts this dynamic.

Not surprisingly, Socrates’ prophetic dream not only concludes the section on Plato’s origins, but also acts as a telling rereading and interpretative key to the previous sections. As with the discussion of Apuleius’ use of the phrase *habitus corporis* for Plato’s name, this dream explains, proleptically, Plato’s development from ‘cygnet’ (*cygnus*) to ‘swan’ (*olor*) in terms of a stable, intrinsic attribute (Plato’s ‘talent’ – *ingenium*).¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ It is hard not to think of Lucius’ background on his mother’s side in the *Metamorphoses* (*Met.* 1.2), where the presence of Plutarch and the philosopher Sextus in Lucius’ family tree projects his future ‘glory’ (*gloria*).

¹⁰⁹ That the movement from *cygnus* to *olor* enacts the ageing from cygnet to swan is not securely established from general Latin usage. However, when Apuleius refers to the swan at *Fl.* 17.17, it is within a trajectory from the ‘childhood prattle’ (*cantilenam pueritiae*) of blackbirds, the ‘youthful song’ (*canticum adolescentiae*) of nightingales to the ‘old-age song’ of swans (*carmen senectae*). On Socrates’ dream

Socrates sees Plato's 'inner talent' (*ingenium intimum*) from his external appearance, an inner talent that will be expressed later by his 'entrancing the ears of men and gods with the music of his song' (*canore musico auditus hominum deorumque mulcentem*). This reference to Plato as the swan in Socrates' dream implicitly extends Plato's Apolline nature according to his birth, as the swan was traditionally the bird of Apollo.¹¹⁰ Just as Apuleius' biography had offered a spectrum of origins for Plato, from sufficient nobility, via divine and philosophical lineage, to a loftier immaculate conception, Socrates reads the latter version from looking at the boy Plato himself, seeing his inner Apolline pedigree in his external features. Hence affirmation of Plato's nature as progeny of Apollo provides one way of reading Socrates' dream and contact with Plato.¹¹¹

The discussion of Plato's origins and Socrates' dream is followed by a summarising statement that makes the first explicit emphasis of Plato's agency. We are told that, from such origins, Plato not only 'excelled' (*praestitit*) heroes in 'virtue' (*uirtus*), but also 'equalled' (*aequiperauit*) the gods in 'power' (*potestas*).¹¹² This is not only a summary of the section on his origins but also the beginning of the affirmation of Plato's agency in relation to these origins. Up to this point, we have not been told of Plato's role in his life, only the actions of others on his behalf. His body 'gave' (*dedit*) him his name, Ariston 'derived his origin' (*originem duxit*) from Neptune, the disguised form of Apollo 'mixed itself' (*se miscuisset*) with Perictione and Socrates 'recounted' (*referret*) his dream. Then Socrates 'saw' (*adspexit*) him and 'said' (*inquit*) he was the swan from his dream. But from this moment on in the

of ornithometamorphosis paralleling a Plautine 'version', see Fletcher (2006) 168–9.

¹¹⁰ Apuleius refers to the swan as the bird of Apollo in the specific context of a fable at *Soc.*, p. 4. 110. He adds that, while both the crow and the swan were birds of Apollo, only the swan was given beautiful song. Compare the anti-Platonic biographical anecdote that relates Socrates' dream of Plato as a crow, pecking at Socrates' bald head and crowing all around (Athenaeus 11.507c), with Socrates inferring that Plato was going to utter many lies over his head.

¹¹¹ Another way is to explain the dream in terms of Plato's *Phaedo*, on which see Fletcher (2006) 97–9.

¹¹² Compare *Fl.* 22, where the Cynic Crates is described like the hero Hercules.

biographical narrative, aside from the testimony of Speusippus and the active role in Plato's conversion by Socrates, Apuleius proceeds to direct his explicit focus onto Plato's agency.

The transition from origins to education is enacted by an intriguing reference to the testimony of Speusippus, who, Apuleius tells us, had access to family documents.¹¹³ An account of Plato's youthful education can be gleaned from several remarks in the dialogues and from later testimony.¹¹⁴ Before Socrates enters, there are various stories of his early education, both his non-philosophical *paideia* and his Heraclitean phase.¹¹⁵ But that Apuleius explicitly mentions Speusippus' account is important. Speusippus praises Plato's boyhood 'talent' (*ingenium*) and 'disposition' (*indoles*) in relation to his perception and modesty; and relates how these are supplemented by his adolescent 'labour and love of study' (*labore atque amore studendi*). Then he testifies to how, in Plato's manhood, these and other 'virtues' (*uirtutes*) came together. Thus, by using Speusippus' testimony, Apuleius is paralleling the innate 'powers' (*potestates*) of his birth and origins with development of the 'virtues' (*uirtutes*) from boyhood, to adolescence, to manhood.¹¹⁶

It is no coincidence that Apuleius' account highlights Speusippus' agency in praising Plato, especially given the generic correspondences between his own text and the *Funeral Banquet* as part of the *On Plato* genre. Apuleius relates how Speusippus, after 'being instructed' (*instructus*) by the domestic documents, 'praises' (*laudat*) the boy, 'relates' (*refert*) his youthful activities and 'bears witness' (*testatur*) to the man he becomes. As with Socrates' dream, this biographical source reflects on the development of the biographical hero, not only highlighting the 'Socratic stage' of his education, but also

¹¹³ On Speusippus' *Funeral Banquet* see Schepens (1998) 212–39. Even if Apuleius did not have direct access to this text, he does at least acknowledge it.

¹¹⁴ For details, see Riginos (1976) 39–52.

¹¹⁵ Compare Philo's *De vita Moysis* 1.211–24 on Moses' education, in which issues of *anamnēsis* and the soul become part of the teaching process; on which, see Mansfeld (1988) 94–8.

¹¹⁶ This focus adds a further implication to the role of *Fl.* 3 and the discussion of Apollo's *uirtutes*, as not compromised by his refined external appearance.

signposting his development beyond it. Speusippus' text utilises certain key terms from the previous section and the dream of Socrates. It shows the dynamic between Plato's 'innate talent' (*intimum ingenium*) and his active education – his 'work and love of studying' (*labore atque amore studendi*) – and as with the movement from cygnet to swan in the dream, there is movement from Plato's boyhood activities to his manhood. Within this movement the terms *ingenium* and *labor* have significant implications. Socrates saw Plato's *ingenium* from his appearance, the same *ingenium* that is praised in Speusippus' eulogy. The *ingenium* that separated Plato from other followers of Socrates is the same *ingenium* that Speusippus refers to in the family documents, the one that Socrates sees in the dream.¹¹⁷ In biographical terms, there is a relationship between divine *potestates* on the one hand, unchanging in Plato's innate *ingenium*, and heroic *uirtutes* on the other, developed through *labor* and *studium*.¹¹⁸ Here we have, in addition to Socrates' dream, a further example of the dynamic in Plato's development that presages his creation of the *corpus* of philosophy.

The teleology of Plato's conversion to philosophy at the feet of Socrates is further marked by Apuleius' account of his youthful education.¹¹⁹ Like other biographers, Apuleius devotes considerable space to 'Plato's activities before turning to philosophy'.¹²⁰ Diogenes Laërtius uses such youthful activities to add further details, for example, linking wrestling

¹¹⁷ Schmutzler (1974) 126 makes the latter link.

¹¹⁸ Apuleius refers to the *labor* at the heart of his own youthful studies and the spurning of pleasure (*Apol.* 5.1). Compare the *labor* of his literary studies at *Apol.* 4.10 and the combination of *labor* and *studia* at *Apol.* 38.5 (his scientific investigations into species of fish).

¹¹⁹ At the end of the account of Plato's *ingenium* and *labor*, there is a seemingly casual reference to his brothers Glaucon and Adeimantus. This serves to mark out Plato's special ability, in that his love of learning marks him out even from his blood relations. Yet it also hints at their notable presence (and Plato's absence) from the *Republic*.

¹²⁰ The phrase used by Riginos (1976) 41–52 to cover Plato's youthful activities. The similarities between Diogenes Laërtius' account (3.4–6) and *Pl.* have been noted by Hicks (1925) 280 note a. (on the dream of Socrates). Both accounts refer to the school of Dionysius (letters), Ariston (wrestling), with Diogenes having an aside on Plato's name, and both mention the Isthmian games; but only Apuleius has the Pythian. The order – painting then poetry – is in both, with Diogenes referring to a chronological move from dithyrambs, to lyric, to tragedy.

with Plato's name, his interest in poetry with his weak voice.¹²¹ But unlike Diogenes, Apuleius structures discussion so as to climax with the prospect of poetic competition.¹²² This focus on competition is further bound up with the variety of Hellenic *paideia* and the range of skills a young man ought to develop.¹²³ In several ways, Plato's development through his various *studia* towards philosophy, as taught by Socrates, makes a problem of his boyhood talent, in that he could desire a false form of praise and glory in ways that echo the false glory of inherited nobility. Socrates' intervention in directing Plato away from the desire for competition to the glory of true praise channels his competitive edge into his philosophical studies. This idea of competition continues into Plato's philosophical training, when we are told he 'defeated' (*uicit*) the other Socratics in *ingenium* and *doctrina*.¹²⁴ Socrates, who 'had taken care to insert' (*inserere curasset*) in his soul the glory that arises from true praise, is now succeeded by Plato's own *labor* through 'which he endeavoured to make Socratic wisdom his own' (*labore, quo adserere eam nisus est*). This reference to 'true praise' and the distinction between how Plato 'would have wanted' (*cupiebat*) to compete in poetic contests and Socrates' leading him away from the 'baseness of the desire' (*humilitatem cupidinis*) not only reconfigures Socrates' dream of the swan of Cupid, but also has a significant Platonic precedent.¹²⁵ The conversion narrative and Plato's philosophical successes have been read in terms of Apuleius' own autobiography.¹²⁶ But in terms of the narrative of the biography, this 'true praise' is achieved, ultimately, by

¹²¹ Brisson (1992) 3636.

¹²² On Plato's intention to perform in tragic competition, see Riginos (1976) 46, 'only in Apuleius' version Plato not only wrote tragedies but even entered them in public competition'.

¹²³ See Whitmarsh (2001) 90–130.

¹²⁴ While in *Fl.* 9 Apuleius prefers to emulate Hippias' *ingenium* as shown in his *doctrina*.

¹²⁵ A Platonic precedent for this could be *Symposium* 198d, Socrates' speech, where he refers to the 'true way to praise'.

¹²⁶ Barra (1963) 8 reads this 'conversion' as motivated by Apuleius' own autobiography ('un motivo autobiografico') and quotes *Fl.* 20.3–4 on Apuleius' self-professed movement towards universal philosophy. Schmutzler (1974) 131 argues that Apuleius' philosophical education ('philosophischen Bildung') need not imply a conversion to philosophy ('Bekehrung zur Philosophie').

the creation of the *corpus* of Platonic philosophy. Once again, the dual-action force of *ratio* and *oratio* that perfected Platonic philosophy is pre-empted in the biography in the form of Plato's *labor* and *elegantia* in transforming his Socratic legacy. Furthermore, the *cupiebat...cupidinis* pun evokes the site of Socrates' dream of the opening section at the altar of Cupid, where Plato becomes the 'cygnet of Cupid' (*Cupidinis cygnus*) and which was the first biographical event that presaged the creation of Platonic philosophy.

There are ways in which the narrative of Plato's origins and development, with its three scenes that prepare the way for the creation of Platonic philosophy to come, also lays the groundwork for key theories expounded in the handbook that follows. For example, the articulation of a balance between Plato's inherited, innate qualities and their supplementation through (correct) education will become central to a discussion of the Sage (*sapiens*) in the second, ethical book. More important, however, is the trajectory of Plato's agency that the opening chapters of the biography have outlined. We have tracked the boy Plato, from his noble origins to his triumphant philosophical education with Socrates, who made his wisdom his own. Apuleius' account of the arrogation of Plato's philosophical voice has come a long way, but this is by no means the end of the story.

Research and teaching

After the extended account of Plato's origins and education, the second half of the biography describes how the death of Socrates sent the budding philosopher on the road in search of new sources of wisdom which concluded with his own writing and teaching which, in turn, is the basis of Apuleius' handbook (*Pl.* 1.3.186–1.4.189):

sed posteaquam Socrates homines reliquit, quaesivit unde proficeret et ad Pythagorae disciplinam se contulit; quam etsi ratione diligenti et magnifica instructam uidebat, rerum tamen continentiam et castitatem magis cupiebat imitari; et, quod Pythagoreorum ingenium adiutum disciplinis aliis sentiebat,

Becoming Plato, voicing Platonism

ad Theodorum Cyrenas, ut geometriam disceret, est profectus et astrologiam adusque Aegyptum iuit petitum, ut inde prophetarum etiam ritus addiceret. et ad Italiam iterum uenit et Pythagoreos Eurytatum Tarentinum et seniore Archytam sectatum atque ad Indos et Magos intendisset animum, nisi tunc eum bella uetuissent Asiatica. quapropter inuenta Parmenidae ac Zenonis studiosius exsecutus, ita omnibus quae admirationi sunt singula suos libros expleuit, ut primus tripartitam philosophiam copularet, sibique inuicem necessarias partes nec pugnare inter se tantummodo, sed etiam mutuis adiuuare auxiliis ostenderet. nam quamuis de diuersis officinis haec ei essent philosophiae membra suscepta, naturalis a Pythagoreis, rationalis atque moralis ex ipso Socratis fonte, unum tamen ex omnibus et quasi proprii partus corpus effecit; et, cum principes harum familiarum impolitas sententias et inchoatas auditoribus tradidissent, eas hic, cum ratione limando tum ad orationis augustae honestissimam speciem induendo, perfectas atque etiam admirabiles fecit.

multi auditorum eius utriusque sexus in philosophia floruerunt. patrimonium in hortulo, qui Academiae iunctus fuit, et in duobus ministris et in patera, qua diis supplicabat, reliquit; auri tantum, quantum puer nobilitatis insigne in auricula gestauit. ceterum tres ad Siciliam aduentus mali quidem carpunt, diuersis opinionibus disserentes. sed ille primo historiae gratia, ut naturam Aetnae et incendia concaui montis intellegeret, secundo, petito Dionysi, ut Syracusanis adsisteret, est profectus, et ut municipales leges eius prouinciae disceret; tertius eius aduentus fugientem Dionem, inpetrata a Dionysio uenia, patriae suae reddidit. quae autem consulta, quae δόγματα graece licet dici, ad utilitatem hominum uiuendique et intelligendi ac loquendi rationem extulerit, hinc ordiemur. nam, quoniam tres partes philosophiae congruere inter se primus obtinuit, nos quoque separatim dicemus de singulis, a naturali philosophia facientes exordium.

But after Socrates had left humankind, he searched for where he might progress and so attached himself to the school of Pythagoras; and though he could see that it provided a philosophical system both rigorous and admirable, instead he wanted to imitate its self-control and purity. And since he perceived that the wisdom of the Pythagoreans was helped by other kinds of learning, he went to Cyrene to learn geometry under Theodorus, and travelled even to Egypt to obtain knowledge of astronomy, and so to learn about the rites of the priests there. And a second time he went to Italy and became a follower of the Pythagoreans, Eurytatus of Tarentum, and the ageing Archytas; and he would have directed his mind to the Indians and Magi, had he not been prevented by the ongoing wars in Asia. Thereby, applying himself with more than usual study to the discoveries of Parmenides and Zeno, he so filled his own books with all the ideas which each had offered separately for admiration, that he was the first to unite tripartite philosophy and to show that its parts, each necessary in turn, not only did not oppose one another,

but even lent mutual support. For although these limbs of his philosophy had been gathered from different workshops – natural philosophy from the Pythagoreans, logical and moral from the very fountainhead of Socrates – nonetheless, from them all, he made one body, as if he had given birth to his own offspring, and, while the fathers of these philosophical families had delivered unpolished and unfinalized opinions to their audiences, Plato made them perfect and even wondrous, by filing them down with reason and dressing them up in the most honourable form of lofty oration.

Many of his listeners of both sexes became renowned in philosophy. He bequeathed his patrimony, consisting of a small garden next to the Academy, and two slaves, and a bowl with which he made offerings to the gods; as to gold, he had as much as he had worn in his ear as a boy to mark his noble birth. Some malcontents carp at his three journeys to Sicily and discuss them with diverse opinions. But he went there the first time for the sake of research, so that he might understand the nature of Aetna and the burning of the gaping mountain, the second, at the request of Dionysius, to assist the people of Syracuse and to study the municipal laws of that province. His third arrival took place in the wish to restore Dion, then an exile, to his country, after Plato had obtained a pardon for him from Dionysius. The tenets – which in Greek can be called *dogmata* – that he expounded for the benefit of man, and for a rational method of living and understanding and speaking, we will now get started on. For since he was the first to achieve harmony between the three parts of philosophy, we too will speak about each separately, beginning with natural philosophy.

The second section of the biography brings us to the post-Socratic phase of Plato's life, his travels, the key metaphor of his formation of the *corpus* of philosophy, his legacy (material and in Sicily) and Apuleius' own account of the exegesis to come. As with my reading of the first section, I shall highlight the important methodological, structural and detailed ways in which the biography is set to connect with the body of the exegesis, as well as seeing how Apuleius responds to the previous section of his biography. While it is worth showing continuity, we also have to appreciate how some things have changed with Socrates' death. The teacher is no longer the touchstone for Plato, as he was for his origins and education. Instead the trajectory is now toward Plato's own role in creating philosophy, and toward Apuleius, assuming the role of exegete in presenting that philosophy.

By the end of the second section of Apuleius' biography, Plato has come a long way along the path of Platonism

development. His philosophical nature – his *ingenium* – has been recognised by his teacher Socrates; he has conquered his desire for poetic competition and its false praise, and followed Socrates' teaching, fusing elegance with hard work. Next Apuleius' Plato experiences a major turning point in his life: Socrates' death. If Socrates' agency perfects Plato's origins and his education, via his dream of Platonism and his philosophical conversion, his master's death operates as nothing less than a crisis in Plato's biography. However, as intimated by Socrates' dream of the swan's transcendent song and Plato's victory over the other Socratics, the star philosophy pupil was restless to leave the nest. The next stage in the biography tells of his Pythagorean adventure, and the exciting sights and sounds on the path to new forms of knowledge. Yet while Plato's Socratic stage did not allow him to spread his wings, the Pythagorean journey had the potential to leave him unsated and endlessly researching.

To fill this void, Plato's post-Socratic stage is one of wandering, as he travels in search of further study. Apuleius parallels how Plato 'had given himself over to Socrates' (*se Socrati dedisset*) with now 'attaching himself to the Pythagorean discipline' (*ad Pythagorae disciplinam se contulit*). However, while Apuleius emphasised that, while alive, Socrates intervened when Plato 'wanted' (*cupiebat*) to enter poetic competitions, after his death this desire is transferred to those aspects of Pythagoreanism Plato 'wanted' (*cupiebat*) to learn. It is widely supposed that the Pythagorean *secta* is the most significant post-Socratic influence on Plato.¹²⁷ This section of the biography develops Plato's Pythagorean learning as a series of intellectual journeys to Cyrene, Egypt, Italy and (potentially) to India and the Magi. The combination of Pythagorean learning and travel for Plato is an imitation of Pythagoras' own quests for wisdom.¹²⁸ Inasmuch as Plato 'filled his own books' (*suos*

¹²⁷ Aristotle *Met.* A 6.987a30. For Plato, Pythagoras and Pythagoreans, see Brisson (2002).

¹²⁸ Apuleius explores these Pythagorean adventures directly in *Fl.* 15.

libros expleuit) with ‘all the ideas’ (*omnibus*), his travels supplement Pythagorean *disciplina* with other disciplines since it aided Pythagorean *ingenium*.

It is significant that the metaphor of Plato’s birth of philosophy is written out of Plato’s unification of philosophy as part of his philosophical development after Socrates’ death. He brought together all he knew, but also knew that what he was learning was a bringing together of other disciplines. Here the rhetorical point is clear: to file with reason and to dress with speech has been the constant tune playing throughout the biography and its portrait of the burgeoning philosopher. Plato’s perfection of philosophy means taking competing and conflicting systems and making one body to pass on to his students. Yet, for Apuleius, the transition from Plato’s researches to the unified body of philosophy is one that affirms the transition we are about to make from biography to exegesis. We can follow Plato’s adventure as he ‘searched’ (*quaesiuit*) for where he could ‘progress’ (*proficeret*) to more philosophical learning and so ‘attached himself’ (*se contulit*) to Pythagoreanism. Even though he ‘saw’ (*uidebat*) particular aspects of this philosophical sect, he ‘wanted’ (*cupiebat*) to imitate it for other reasons. This model continues with other ‘journeys’ (*profectus est, iuit, uenit*) and ‘learning’ (*disceret, addisceret*) until we discover how he ‘filled his own books’ (*suos libros expleuit*), ‘united’ (*copularet*) philosophy, ‘showed’ (*ostenderet*) its parts could be brought together, ‘produced’ (*effecit*) one body and, from there, ‘made’ (*fecit*) it perfect. This amazing redirection of Plato’s activities from a period of research to frenzied synthesis and production creates the crescendo for the whole biography. First, however, Apuleius has a few loose ends to wrap up: Plato’s intellectual and material legacy, the troubling case of Sicily and the transition to the exegesis.

The final section of the biography describes how Plato’s intellectual legacy of *philosophia* was continued by his students ‘of both sexes’ (*eius utriusque sexus*, *Pl.* 1.4.188).¹²⁹ This

¹²⁹ Based on *Rep.* 451. See *Pl.* 2.25.258.

indiscriminate extension of his legacy acts as a fitting conclusion to the previous section on his role in the unification of philosophy into one *corpus*.¹³⁰ The next three parts of the section, dealing with Plato's material legacy, his three trips to Sicily and the beginning of transition to the doctrine, lack the coherence of the previous sections. Nevertheless, there is a unifying factor established by its opening line and the notion of the audience. What Plato leaves behind, what constitutes his legacy, is set up as an issue for his inheritors to sift through and understand. Furthermore, there is significance to the ordering of the three parts of the section, as the modest material legacy is set before the discussion of the trips to Sicily to undermine accusations of Plato's parasitic existence in the wealthy court of Dionysius.¹³¹

Apuleius describes Plato's material legacy as especially modest; his account can be compared with what seems to be an accurate account of Plato's will in Diogenes Laërtius (3.41–3).¹³² The small garden joined to the Academy is referred to elsewhere by Diogenes (3.20), but not in the will.¹³³ The reference to the two slaves, bowl and earring represent Plato as having lived the simple life.¹³⁴ Furthermore, the biography returns to the issue of Plato's origins and his *nobilitas* in the reference

¹³⁰ Compare Cicero's reference to the flourishing students of Carneades in the Academy, *Acad.* 2.16.

¹³¹ Barra (1963) 17–18 sees the irony in the attacks on Plato for his parasitic Sicilian expedition not translating into an extensive material legacy ('Così pure sui suoi viaggi, quante malignità non si sono accumulate!'), but does not see this as a narrative strategy of the Platonic biography in fashioning this juxtaposition.

¹³² On this passage, see Beaujeu (1973) 253, Schmutzler (1974) 148–9. The main area of discussion relates to discrepancies between Apuleius' account of Plato's patrimony and the more detailed account in Diogenes. Diogenes refers to four slaves and a silver vessel that is the equivalent to the *patera*. There is no mention of Plato's will in Philodemus. Between the description of his death and the list of followers there is a lacuna, on which see Dorandi (1991) 222.

¹³³ On the garden in general, see Dillon (1983). The story of the garden as recounted by Diogenes is intriguing and is related to the biographical tradition that tells of Plato being sold into slavery. The story goes that when Plato was sold into slavery, Anniceris the Cyreniac bought him and sent him back to Athens. When Dion tried to pay him back the money he had spent, Anniceris used it to buy the garden. For a stimulating account of Plato's slavery, see DuBois (2003) 153–69.

¹³⁴ Schmutzler (1974) 148 describes Apuleius representing him as a 'bedürfnislose Weise' which he defines as a 'kynischen Vorstellungen'.

to the earring. This legacy responds to accounts of extraneous wealth throughout the corpus, as articulated in land, number of slaves and possessions.¹³⁵ In the biography, the previous reference to the flourishing of Plato's listeners 'in philosophy' (*in philosophia*) is juxtaposed with his modest material legacy consisting of 'a small garden, two slaves, and a bowl' (*in hortulo, in duobus ministeriis, in patera*). Then, the concluding reference to his golden earring operates as a hinge to the final section of the biography on the three journeys to Sicily. What matters is that the reasoning behind Plato's visits is bound up with his material legacy. Just as Plato's legacy operates in terms of his philosophical teachings as well as his possessions, so does his reputation – which is set to undermine the 'wealth' of the former by exaggerating that of the latter.

Amid this discussion of his legacy is the topic of Plato's travels to Sicily. Apuleius does not include this in the general account, but keeps them for a kind of appendix to his biography.¹³⁶ The reference to the malcontents who are divided, speaking of 'diverse opinions' (*diuersis opinionibus*), hints at the earlier reference to the 'diverse schools' (*diuersis officinis*), while their divisive nature may hint at Plato's unification of philosophy, as well as his smearing as pet parasite at the tyrant Dionysius' court.¹³⁷ The warning inherent in the account of the trips to Sicily becomes clear: if you think that Plato is wealthy in any other way, your petulant attacks could divide and dismember the rich philosophical legacy which the master has constructed and which is about to be narrated in all its glory. Furthermore, Apuleius makes another defence of Plato's Sicilian journeys which is more telling for the exegesis of Platonic philosophy to come. His way of excusing each trip is through a different philosophical rationale. On the first trip,

¹³⁵ The issue of poverty has been one of the features linking to Apuleius' self-presentation and the Platonic biography, see Hijmans (1987) 435.

¹³⁶ Sinko (1905) 176, 'Siciliae illae peregrinationes... appendicis loco vitae adiunguntur', quoted in Barra (1963) 6 n. 4.

¹³⁷ For general *antiplatonika*, see Geffcken (1929). The way in which the accusation of parasitism is portrayed in the *Epistles* shows how the transmission of philosophy can operate through the figure of Plato. See the relevant passage of the second letter (*Epist.* 2. 312b–c).

Plato ‘researched’ (*intellegeret*) the nature of Aetna, on the second he ‘studied’ (*disceret*) provincial laws, and on the third he ‘restored’ (*reddidit*) Dion, following his exile. Apuleius makes two of the three trips explicit extensions of Plato’s philosophical researches, while the third could be explained by an ethically motivated act, which, as we shall see, has a further resonance when we move into the exegesis.

After the reaffirmation of Plato’s philosophical and material legacy has been made, Apuleius makes the move from biography to exegesis. This section is pivotal to understanding what kind of work *De Platone* is, not only in how Apuleius will treat his exposition of Platonic philosophy, but also how he aligns his own treatment with that of Plato himself. Apuleius tells us how Plato ‘expounded’ (*extulerit*) the ‘rational method of living and understanding and speaking’ (*uiuendique et intellegendi ac loquendi rationem*) for the ‘beneficial use of humankind’ (*ad utilitatem hominum*). This description has obvious similarities with other accounts of the tripartite nature of philosophy.¹³⁸ For example, it has been identified as a Ciceronian version of the division, one that Cicero ascribed to Antiochus, of a *philosophandi ratio triplex* (*Acad.* 1.19).¹³⁹ It is, however, most productive to compare this account of division to how Plato created philosophy – twice – in the biographical narrative: both how he was ‘the first to unite tripartite philosophy’ (*primus tripartitam philosophiam copularet*) and how he then joined the *naturalis, rationalis atque moralis* parts through his education (the first through Pythagoras, and the latter two through Socrates). While issues of the ordering of the parts of philosophy and where Plato ‘found’ them can be debated, the more significant point is how Apuleius moves from Plato’s uniting and expounding of philosophy to his own exegesis.¹⁴⁰ He repeats how Plato harmonised philosophy, but then states how he ‘will

¹³⁸ On the general issue of philosophical division, see Boyancé (1971), Hadot (1979), Ierodiakonou (1993). On Alcinoüs’ division, see Dillon (1993) 57–60; comparison with Apuleius’, see Göransson (1995) 141–2.

¹³⁹ *una de uita et moribus, altera de natura et rebus occultis, tertia de disserendo et quid uerum*, with a different order adopted later at *Acad.* 2.36.

¹⁴⁰ For an extended discussion of the tripartition of philosophy across the Apuleian corpus, see Fletcher (2006) 152–8.

speak' (*dicemus*) on the parts separately.¹⁴¹ It is at this precise moment that Apuleius' authorial voice as exegete joins in with other key scenes in the Platonic biography: Socrates' dream, Plato's philosophical victory and the *corpus* of philosophy. As we shall see, this voicing of his exegetical method in response to the developing agency of Plato and his philosophy will become apparent at crucial moments in the exegesis as well. In addition, there is one final gesture that ties up the biography with the exegesis to come. As already argued, Apuleius defends Plato's Sicilian journeys by making them into either philosophical researches or ethically positive acts. It is surely no coincidence that Apuleius chooses this defence as the moment to transition his own exegesis. Furthermore, the Sicily trips coincide with the order of the natural philosophy and ethical division of the work to come since the first trip was to investigate Aetna, whereas the second was to learn of laws and institutions. Finally, the third trip in support of Dion is hinted at in the description of Plato expounding philosophy 'for the beneficial use of humankind' (*ad utilitatem hominum*). In short, even though it could pass for mere biographical fact, Apuleius' bridging of biography and exegesis in *De Platone* transforms the Sicily journeys into forceful protreptic.

Plato's voices

Just as Apuleius' account of Plato's post-Socratic Pythagorean researches inform his construction of a perfect body of philosophy from the 'unpolished and unfinalized opinions' (*impolitas sententias et inchoatas*) of previous thinkers, his defence of Plato's reasons for going to Sicily doubles as an explanation of the two-book discussion of natural and ethical philosophy that follows. The question of how Plato became Plato (his researches) leads into how Plato presented his philosophy (his teaching) and, in turn, the question of how Plato's researches

¹⁴¹ The reference to 'matters which singly had been an object of admiration' (*quae admirationi sunt singula*) is picked up again in the discussion of the layout of Apuleius' exegesis (*separatim... de singulis*). In *Apol.*, *singula* is used of individual charges (*Apol.* 28, *singula consideremus*).

have been (mis)presented (Sicily) turns into how Plato's philosophy *should* be presented (Apuleius' handbook). In *De Platone* it is Apuleius who is impersonating Plato, by explicitly 'presenting' his philosophy as a biographical exegesis. Yet, as we shall see, the transition from Plato's researches to teaching, which Apuleius enacts in his defence of the Sicilian journeys, and the transition to the handbook proper, both parallel an important methodological transition from biographical exegesis to other 'voices'. Beyond the core biographical exegesis, we encounter the other voices of several conceptual personifications as figures who literally act out Plato's theories (e.g. Reason, Humankind, the Beholder of Virtue, the Sage). In addition, we also discover the authorial voice of Apuleius, who will address 'you' and 'us' and lead us towards the philosophical life in engaged protreptic discourse. Amid the lesson, with all its voices and tropes, however, we are never to forget how our philosophy professor arrived at his teaching position. Even though the biography of Plato dramatises the emergence of Plato, his becoming, it also demonstrates Plato's agency in transforming his education into the refined and rhetorical body of philosophy. Likewise, the enjoyment of the methodological variety of the handbook reminds us that speaking Platonism makes demands on the reader to engage creatively with the lesson.¹⁴²

Plato says: biographical exegesis

The very beginning of the exegesis proper – the opening of the first book on natural philosophy with Plato's account of the three principles of the cosmos – not only displays how the core biographical exegesis will work, but also its nuanced *uariatio* (*Pl.* 1.5.190–1.6.193):

initia rerum esse tria arbitratur Plato: deum et materiam inabsolutam, informem, nulla specie nec qualitatis significatione distinctam, rerumque formas, quas ἰδέας idem uocat.¹⁴³ sed haec de deo sentit, quod sit incorporeus. is

¹⁴² Something that is very familiar to any reader of the *Metamorphoses* and its caveat: *lector intende: laetaberis*.

¹⁴³ The textual problem is summarised eloquently by Göransson (1995) 145 n. 1, who prefers Apuleian misunderstanding of a Greek source to trouble in transmission.

unus, αἰτ, ἀπερίμετρος genitor rerumque omnium exstructor, beatus et beaticus, optimus, nihil indigens, ipse conferens cuncta. quem quidem caelestem pronuntiat, indictum, innominabilem et, ut ait ipse, ἀόρατον, ἀδάμαστον cuius naturam inuenire difficile est, si inuenta sit, in multos eam enuntiari non posse. Platonis haec uerba sunt: θεὸν εὐρεῖν τε ἔργον εὐρόντα τε εἰς πολλοὺς ἐκφέρειν ἀδύνατον. materiam uero improcreabilem incorruptamque commemorat, non ignem neque aquam nec aliud de principiis et absolutis elementis esse, sed ex omnibus primam, figurarum capacem fictionique subiectam, adhuc rudem et figurationis qualitate uiduatam, <dum>¹⁴⁴ deus artifex conformat uniuersam. infinitam uero idcirco quod ei sit interminata magnitudo. nam quod infinitum est indistinctam magnitudinis habet finem atque ideo, cum uiduata sit fine, infinibilis recte uideri potest. sed neque corpoream nec sane incorpoream concedit esse. ideo autem non putat corpus, quod omne corpus specie qualicumque non careat; sine corpore uero esse non potest dicere, quod nihil incorporeale corpus exhibeat.

Plato maintains that there are three principles of things: god and matter (which is incomplete, unformed, distinguished by neither feature nor mark of quality), and the forms of things, which he calls 'ideas'. But in respect to god, he believes the following: that he is incorporeal. Plato says that he is one, 'without circumference', the parent and builder of all things; blessed and bringer of blessings, the best, lacking nothing; and it is he himself who assembles all things. Indeed Plato declares him heavenly, ineffable, unnameable and, as he himself says, 'invisible, irrepressible'; whose nature is not only difficult to discover, but even if it were to be found, could not be communicated to the many. These are Plato's words: 'to discover god is difficult, and for one who has discovered him, it is impossible to communicate this to most people'. But of matter he records how it admits of neither creation nor destruction, and that it is neither fire nor water nor any other of the elements or pure substances; rather that it is the first of all things to receive forms and first to be subjected to the process of creation, it is shapeless and without form down to the point <until> god the master craftsman shapes it into a universal form. In fact it is infinite because its expanse has no limit and therefore, since matter is deprived of limit, it can properly be seen as infinite. But Plato does not allow that it is either corporeal or incorporeal. The reason why he thinks it is not a body is that no body lacks some kind of form, but he is not able to say that it is without a body, because nothing incorporeal can exhibit a body.

In this passage we encounter a series of variations on the basic methodology of biographical exegesis. Apuleius refers to what

In Fletcher (2006) I defended the transmitted text, following Barra (1965) on the grounds that, since the Platonic ἰδέας cannot be translated simply as *formas* but requires the periphrastic *rerum formas*, the elucidation with its series of qualifying terms is requisite. However, in Fletcher (forthcoming) I revert to the corrected text.

¹⁴⁴ Added, as either *donec* or *dum* is required before *deus*.

he ‘says’ (*ait*), which refers to quotes of Plato’s own words in Greek or glosses which can be seen to follow his works closely, specifically the *Timaeus*.¹⁴⁵ Apuleius also emphasises Plato’s agency in the use of terminology when he refers to the Forms as what he ‘calls’ (*uocat*) *ideas*. At the same time Apuleius expresses a variation in Plato’s agenda by using several different verbs (*arbitror*, *sentio*, *pronuntio*, *commemoro*, *concedo*, *puto*). This variation betrays how Apuleius articulates the three principles, the nature of god, matter and the Forms in terms of Plato’s approach to each of these themes. In terms of god, Apuleius has Plato ‘believe’ (*sentit*) that god is incorporeal and makes him ‘declare’ (*pronuntiat*) that god is celestial, ineffable and unnameable.¹⁴⁶ However, for the discussion of matter, Apuleius has Plato ‘record’ (*commemorat*) an extended debate over its ambiguous nature. He cannot ‘allow’ (*concedit*) that matter is either corporeal or incorporeal, since, on the one hand, he ‘thinks’ (*putat*) it is not body, but is also ‘not able to say’ (*non potest dicere*) it is without a body. Now, if we compare Apuleius’ use of these terms with those used when Apuleius has Plato speak of god, we see a significant distinction. For the former, Apuleius’ keeps Plato at a distance from (the topic of) god by referring to his perception of the divine, and pronouncing the absolute nature of god, while for the latter, Plato’s discussion is more hands-on, so that the nature of matter, unlike god, can be more immediately related and disputed. In fact, Apuleius continues the discussion of the nature of matter by explaining Plato’s ambivalence from a more subjective perspective.¹⁴⁷ This variety in the biographical exegesis is, therefore, tailored to the topic under discussion and this happens elsewhere in the first book in the discussion of Providence.

Apuleius’ account of Providence (*prouidentia*) moves from what Plato writes about it to what the concept itself does. To

¹⁴⁵ E.g. *Tim.* 28c.

¹⁴⁶ The verb *arbitror* is used several times in the exegesis. In fact, Plato’s first appearance in the *Apologia*, as a source for philosophical thinking on sight, uses this verb: ‘as Plato thought’ (*ut Plato arbitrat*, *Apol.* 15.33).

¹⁴⁷ On the subjective perspective in this account of matter, see Gersh (1986) 318–21.

enable this transition, there is a subtle manipulation of the core biographical exegesis (*Pl.* 1.12.205):

sed omnia quae naturaliter et propterea recte feruntur prouidentiae custodia gubernantur nec ullius mali causa deo poterit adscribi. quare nec omnia ad fati sortem arbitratur esse referenda. ita enim definit: prouidentiam esse diuinam sententiam, conseruatricem prosperitatis eius, cuius causa tale suscepit officium; diuinam legem esse fatum, per quod ineuitabiles cogitationes dei atque incepta complentur. unde si quid prouidentia geritur, id agitur et fato, et quod fato terminatur prouidentia debet susceptum uideri.

But all things which occur naturally, and thus correctly, are governed by the guardianship of Providence: nor can the cause of any evil be attributable to god. For this reason, [Plato] maintains that not all things must be referred to the lottery of Fate. He offers the following definitions: Providence is a divine verdict, the protectress of that prosperity for the sake of which she undertook such an office. Fate is a divine law, through which the inevitable intentions and initial plans of god are fulfilled. Hence, if anything occurs through Providence, it also happens due to Fate; and what is concluded by Fate should be understood as initiated by Providence.

Apuleius' emphasis on Plato's judgement that not all things are referred to Fate enacts a transition from the impossibility of evil-doing by god. This, in turn, calls for Plato to (re)define Providence so that its status as 'divine verdict' (*diuina sententia*) incorporates and initiates Fate, as 'divine law' (*diuina lex*), but, importantly, not vice versa.¹⁴⁸ Fate therefore, becomes an 'office' (*officium*) subordinate to Providence. The nuances of biographical exegesis here are put to work by Apuleius to show how Plato intervenes in a debate about the workings of the cosmos through his wise judgement and then sets the matter straight with his corrective definition.

Such variations in the biographical exegesis in the first book of natural philosophy, while subtle, do pave the way for more explicit variation in the second, ethical book. It is during the exegesis of Platonic ethics that Apuleius utilises this method to make connections between the doctrine and its creator, especially when the topic turns to issues of education and virtue, the statesman and the state.

¹⁴⁸ See Gersh (1986) 280–5.

After a brief address to his son Faustinus, to which we will return, Apuleius describes how the happy life can be achieved through ‘good things’ (*bona*). Plato divides these goods into the pre-eminent and those which are goods by our participation in them: by the former he means all things that come from god and by the second he means the human virtues. Then Apuleius tells of Plato’s conception of humankind as neither completely good nor bad, but with an *ingenium* reliant on instructors to imbue them with morals and instructions and ‘learn to be ruled by Justice as their school-mistress’ (*regi discant magistra iustitia*). The negotiation of the relationship between innate talent (*ingenium*) and education or learning (*disciplina, doctrina, studium*) is one that recalls the broad dynamic between origins and education we encountered in the biography.¹⁴⁹ The dichotomy is most clearly seen in a passage when Apuleius has Plato state the following (*Pl.* 2.3.222–3):

hominem ab stirpe ipsa neque absolute malum nec bonum nasci, sed ad utrumque proclive ingenium eius esse; habere semina quidem quaedam utrarumque rerum cum nascendi origine copulata, quae educationis disciplina in partem alteram debeant emicare, doctoresque puerorum nihil antiquius curare oportet quam ut amatores uirtutum uelint esse, moribus, institutis eos ad id prorsus imbuere, et regere et regi discant magistra iustitia.¹⁵⁰

Man, from his own stock, is born neither absolutely good nor evil, but his nature inclines to both; he has some seeds, at least, of both, which are united at the moment of his birth, and which, by the lessons of upbringing, ought to shine out in one direction rather than the other, and that the instructors of boys must care for nothing more highly than wanting them to be lovers of the virtues, and imbue them with programmes trained precisely for that, and learn to rule and be ruled by school-mistress Justice.

Plato’s voice is not immediately presented at the forefront, but in the passages that follow it becomes clear that he is called upon to take on the role of the teacher of virtue that has

¹⁴⁹ On *ingenium*, see Hijmans (1987) 458–9 and Roskam (2005) 385 who refers to Hijmans (1987) 458–9. In addition to the passages discussed below, see *Pl.* 2.22.251. For *doctrina* in Apuleius in general, see Bradley (1997) and (2012) 53–7.

¹⁵⁰ On this passage, see Beaujeu (1973) 284–5. Roskam (2005) 384 n. 126 emphasises its originality.

been outlined in this passage. Apuleius next describes the three types of *ingenium*: 'superior, mean, worst' (*unum, medium, pessimum*). The section on the worst type is especially focused on Plato's voice (*Pl.* 2.4.225):

malitiam uero deterrimi et omnibus uitiiis imbuti hominis ducebat esse; quod accidere censebat, cum optima et rationabilis portio et quae etiam imperitare ceteris debet, seruit aliis, illae uero uitiorum ducatrices, iracundia et libido, ratione sub iugum missa dominantur.

But [Plato] considered wickedness to be characteristic of a most depraved person, imbued with all the vices. Which he decreed to occur when the portion (of the soul) which is the best and rational, and ought to rule the rest, is slave to the others, when anger and lust, those temptresses of the vices, are in control, while reason has been sent under the yoke in submission.

This language intimates that Plato himself will lead the fight against the imbalance in the soul and, from the discussion of virtues and disciplines to the ordering of the state, Plato's instruction will be the best to follow. So, when Apuleius discusses the two portions of the oratorical art, one of which is the discipline that contemplates what is good and is tenacious of what is just, fitted to and agreeing with Plato's school, he describes this figure as the statesman. The opposite form is flattery, truth's double and an irrational experience which cannot teach. It is the shadow and image of the oratorical portion of the statesman's art. On which note, Apuleius transitions to discussion of statesmanship as participating in virtues and how it cares for the soul by issues of law-giving and the lawcourts. Once again he brings in the sophists and flatterers who only imitate the lawcourts and thus only pretend to increase virtue in the soul, whereas in fact they weaken them. This leads to discussion of virtues that can or cannot be taught (*Pl.* 2. 9.234–5):

uirtutes eas doceri et studeri posse arbitrabatur, quae ad rationabilem animum pertinent, id est sapientiam et prudentiam; et illas, quae uitiosis partibus pro remedio resistunt, id est fortitudinem et continentiam, rationabiles quidem esse, sed superiores uirtutes pro disciplinis haberi; ceteras, si perfectae sunt, uirtutes appellat; si semiperfectae sunt, non illas quidem disciplinas uocandas esse censet, sed non in totum existimat disciplinis alienas. iustitiam

uero, quod trinis animae regionibus sparsa sit, artem uiuendi ac disciplinam putat, et nunc docilem esse, nunc usu et experiendo prouenire.

[Plato] maintained that the virtues that can be taught and studied belong to the rational soul, i.e. wisdom and prudence; and that those virtues that resist, as a remedy, the corrupt portions of the soul, viz. courage and continence, are certainly rational, but that only the higher virtues are regarded as sciences; the rest, if they are perfect, he calls virtues; if they are only half-perfect, he decrees that they ought not to be called sciences, yet he does not consider them to be entirely strangers to the sciences. But justice, in that it is spread across the three parts of the soul, he thinks is the art and science of living, and is at one time teachable and at another emerges from use and experience.

The variety of the exegetical mode is interesting here because, after an extended discussion of the statesman's art, here we have Plato himself playing the role of laying down the law in terms of what constitutes the virtues and what instead are mere sciences. Apuleius makes Plato a pedagogic presence explicitly by using the term *censeo*, a term that has both political and legal resonances.¹⁵¹ At the very end of the work, there is a sequence of striking uses of this term, especially in discussions of the state, based on the *Republic* and *Laws*, which are particularly telling for how Apuleius employs variation in his biographical exegesis. His discussion of the state in general opens with Plato decreeing constitutions and regimes (*Pl.* 2.24.255):

de ciuitatum uero constitutione et de obseruatione regendarum rerum publicarum ita censet Plato.

On the constitution of states, and on the guardianship of the government of public affairs, Plato decrees as follows.

Then, at the end of the discussion of the *Laws*, Plato's judicial agency is again emphasised, when Apuleius writes (*Pl.* 2.26.260):

legesque huic ciuitati promulgari iubet et legum moderatorem, cum aliquid tale concipiet, ad contemplandas virtutes hortatur.

He orders that laws be promulgated for this state and encourages the law-maker to pay attention to the virtues, when he conceives of doing such a thing.

¹⁵¹ See Gunderson (2009) 97 on Caesar decreeing (*censet*).

This passage is especially powerful given that in Plato's dialogue it is the legislator that lays down the law (630e):

οὐχ ὡς πρὸς ἀρετῆς τι μόνιον, καὶ ταῦτα τὸ φαυλότατον, ἐτίθει βλέπων, ἀλλὰ πρὸς πᾶσαν ἀρετὴν.

[We ought not to have said] that he [the legislator] laid down his rules looking at only one part of virtue, and the most trivial part at that, but at all of virtue.

One rationale for this reworking of the Platonic text is that Apuleius is making sense of the change from the *Republic* to the *Laws* in terms of the role of the law. After an impassioned exposition of the guiding role of virtue in the state, we are told that Plato doesn't require laws in his imagined state in the *Republic* (*Pl.* 2.25.258):

eiusmodi ciuitatem nullis extrinsecus latis legibus indigere; regi eam quippe prudentia et eiusmodi institutis ac moribus, quibus fundata ceteras leges non requirat. et hanc quidem et figmentum aliquod ueritatis exempli causa per se compositam uult esse rem publicam.

[Plato says] that this kind of city-state has no need for imported laws, inasmuch as a city-state that has been founded on temperance and other such virtues is governed by them and consequently need not look elsewhere for its legal code. And indeed this state, created by him as a model, [Plato] intends also as a fictional representation of the truth.¹⁵²

The reference to the utopian nature of the state described in the *Republic*, echoing Plato (592a–b), prepares the way for the change in tone of the biographical exegesis in making Plato the law-giver in the *Laws*. This role is emphasised when in the immediately following discussion after the *Laws* Plato yet again lays down the law ('decrees', *censet*), albeit somewhat anachronistically, as to the mode of mixed government.¹⁵³ He explains this as follows (*Pl.* 2.27.261):

nec enim uel optimatum uel etiam popularis imperii solos et meros status utiles arbitratur nec impunitas rectorum culpas relinquit, sed magis censet his debere constare rationem, qui sint potestate potiores.

For, nor does he think that simple and pure forms of government, either of the nobility or even by the people, are beneficial, nor does he leave unpunished

¹⁵² Reiterating *Rep.* 425e.

¹⁵³ Apuleius' reference to a mixed constitution stems from Plato's *Laws* 693e.

the offences of those in power, but decrees that there ought to be accountability for those who are the superior in power.

While these uses of the biographical exegetical mode are tailored to the material at hand (i.e. the use of *censeo* in discussions of forms of government), there is another intriguing aspect of Apuleius' use of this mode in the discussion of the *Republic* which parallels the section of the biography on legacy – Plato's teaching and his material legacy. The detail of his modest material legacy, where the only gold he owns is his earring, chimes with his teaching in the *Republic* (*Pl.* 2.25.257):

moribus et huiusmodi cunctos cives imbuendos esse dicit, ut iis in quorum tutelam et fidem res publica illa creditur, auri atque argenti habendi cupido nulla sit, ne specie communi priuatas opes adpetant.

Plato also says that all citizens must be imbued with such a character that in those to whose protection and faith that state has been entrusted, there is no desire to possess gold or silver, nor seek the private wealth under the guise of public gain.

So too the detail that Plato taught both sexes in philosophy is reaffirmed in the same section of the exegesis (*Pl.* 2.25.258):

et qui de nuptiis talibus erunt orti studiis congruentibus imbuentur et optimis disciplinis communi praeceptorum magisterio docebuntur, non uirile secus modo, uerum etiam feminarum, quas uult Plato omnibus partibus quae propriae uirorum putantur coniungendas esse, bellicis et gymnasticis et musicis; quippe utrisque cum natura una sit, eandem esse uirtutem.¹⁵⁴

And the children born of such marriages will be imbued with suitable studies and will be taught in the very best subjects by the group teaching of instructors, not merely those of the male sex, but women too, whom Plato wants to share in all those departments that are thought to be specific to men, such as war and <gymnastics and music>, since because there is for both sexes one mutual nature, their virtue is the same.

For sure we will recall that both the biography and the exegesis are in some ways rewritings of Platonic texts, but the explicit use of biographical exegesis in the latter leads back to these passages in the biography.

¹⁵⁴ *Contra* Moreschini, I follow Thomas' supplement here, based on the list of activities at Plato *Rep.* 452a.

Other voices: conceptual personification

Apuleius' nuanced biographical exegesis reiterates the fusion of Plato's life and philosophy throughout *De Platone*. Furthermore, especially in the second, ethical book, if we find ourselves paying attention to *how* Plato is teaching, then the process whereby Plato made Plato in the biography has had its desired effect. Another such pay-off from highlighting Plato's voice in the exegesis is that it accentuates those moments when Apuleius changes his approach and moves away from the core biographical exegesis. For example, we have already seen in the case of Providence that, within the general framework of Plato speaking, there are times when the narrative highlights the particular topic under discussion and lets it take the reins of the discourse.

There are several minor impersonations à la Providence in the course of the exegesis. For example, Reason (*ratio*) is personified as a ruler in matters of virtue (*Pl.* 2.5.227):

sed uirtutem Plato habitum esse dicit mentis optime et nobiliter figuratum, quae concordem sibi, quietem, constantem etiam eum facit, cui fuerit fideliter intimata, non uerbis modo sed factis etiam secum et cum ceteris congruentem: haec uero procliuius, si ratio in regni sui solio constituta appetitus et iracundias semper domitas et in frenis habet ipsaeque ita oboediunt, ut tranquillo ministerio fungantur.

But virtue, Plato says, is the disposition of the mind that is excellently and nobly formed, which makes the person on whom it is faithfully impressed in harmony with himself, calm, and even resolute, in accord with himself and the rest of humankind not only in words but also in deeds: and does this more readily if Reason, set on the throne of her kingdom, holds the appetites and passions consistently in subjection and under the reins, and if they obey her so as to be chased away, through serving her without disturbance.

The regal personification of Reason reappears soon after in the discussion of the division between perfect and imperfect virtues (*Pl.* 2.6.228):

uirtutum perfectae quaedam, imperfectae sunt aliae; et imperfectae illae, quae in omnibus beneficio solo naturae proueniunt uel quae solis disciplinis traduntur et magistra ratione discuntur; eas igitur, quae ex omnibus constant, dicemus esse perfectas. imperfectas uirtutes semet comitari negat; eas uero,

quae perfectae sint, individuas sibi et inter se conexas esse ideo maxime arbitratur, quod ei, cui sit egregium ingenium, si accedat industria, usus etiam et disciplina, quam dux rerum ratio fundauerit, nihil relinquetur, quod non uirtus administret. uirtutes omnes cum animae partibus diuidit et illam uirtutem, quae ratione sit nixa et est spectatrix diiudicatrixque omnium rerum, prudentiam dicit atque sapientiam.

Some virtues are perfect, others imperfect, and the imperfect are those which arise in everyone thanks to the help of nature alone, or are bestowed solely by education and learned from the lessons of school-mistress Reason. Therefore, those virtues that are made up of all of these attributes, we will call perfect. Plato denies that imperfect virtues are associated with each other; in turn, those which are perfect, he thinks are inseparable and interconnected with each other, because for the person who has an outstanding innate ability, if there is added diligence, practice and discipline, which Reason, the leader of things, has established, nothing will remain that virtue cannot administer. Plato divides all the virtues in accordance with the parts of the soul and the virtue which puts its faith in Reason, and is the spectator and judge of all matters, he calls prudence and wisdom.

Here the virtues undergo an educational process. Beginning with the group lessons of Reason the school-mistress (*magistra*), the virtues gain their own offices which they can ‘administer’. Even when a virtue graduates a specific role (e.g. prudence or wisdom) and the resulting personified status as ‘spectator and judger’, she is still reliant on Reason.

There are other such fleshed-out impersonations at work in the exegesis, but the most extended impersonations occur at the level of isolated voices which are calculated to dramatise and accentuate the central voice of Plato.¹⁵⁵ There are three main instances: Humankind (*homo*), the Beholder of Virtue (*spectator uirtutis*), and the Sage (*sapiens*). All three operate as potent ‘conceptual personifications’ within the exegetical narrative and show Platonic theory at work beyond the dictating role of Plato’s controlling voice in the biographical exegesis.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵ E.g. compare how Justice (*iustitia*) ‘looks abroad’ (*foras spectat*) and is the ‘trustworthy observer’ (*fida speculatrix*) of others (*Pl.* 2.7.229), while Piety (*religiositas*) is ‘subject to’ (*mancipata est*) the ‘honour of the gods’ (*deum honori*) (*Pl.* 2.7.229).

¹⁵⁶ For my conception of ‘conceptual personification’ I am inspired by the term ‘conceptual personae’ used by Deleuze and Guattari (1994) 61–84.

The discussion of Providence, after a brief but important account of *daemones*, leads into the account of Humankind (*homo*) (*Pl.* I.12.207):

omnium uero terrenorum nihil homine praestabilius prouidentia dedit.

But of all earthly beings, Providence has given nothing more outstanding than Humankind.

After the wonderful portrait of Plato's conception of the human body and the role of Reason as teacher and ruler we have already discussed, Apuleius transitions to an account of the senses which tells how the superiority of his senses of sight and hearing separates Humankind from the rest of the animal kingdom (*Pl.* I.14.211):

sensus quidem ipsi communes nobis sunt cum ceteris animantibus; at enim hominis sollertia eiusmodi diuino beneficio instructor auctiorque, quod auditus illi est uisusque praestantior. oculis namque metitus est caelum siderumque circuitus et astrorum obitus atque ortus eorumque cum significatibus spatia comprehendit, ex quo pulcherrimus et uberrimus fons ille philosophiae profluxit. auditu uero quid homini magnificentius potuit euenire, per quem prudentiam sapientiamque condisceret numerosque orationis metiretur ac modos faceret fieretque ipse totus modulatus ac musicus? lingua et dentium uallum et ipsius osculi uenustas accessit. quod quidem aliis animantibus ad explendam uictus necessitatem inferendasque uentri copias comparatum est, sed homini promptuarium potius rectae rationis et suauissimae orationis hoc datum est, ut, quae prudentia corde conceperit, ea sensa promat oratio.

Certainly the senses themselves are common to us and the other animals; but that human resourcefulness given by divine favour is better equipped and more abundant because of man's superior hearing and sight. For with his eyes he has taken measure of the sky and the orbits of the stars, and the settings and risings of celestial bodies, and understood their locations as well as their signs, from where flowed that spring of the most beautiful and plentiful Philosophy. Indeed, as for hearing, could anything more magnificent happen to him than that sense through which he learns simultaneously prudence and wisdom, through which he measures the rhythms and patterns of speech and makes melodies, and becomes himself completely harmonious and musical? Add the tongue, and the rampart of the teeth and the beauty of a little mouth. To other living beings it has certainly been provided for the sake of advancing the necessities of living, and bringing supplies to the stomach; but

to humankind it has been given as the store-room of righteous Reason and the sweetest discourse, so that speech might publish ideas that prudence has planned in the heart.

In this wonderful passage, Apuleius balances the senses of seeing and hearing and introduces speech in terms of their founding role in the pursuit of philosophy and the combination of *ratio* and *oratio*. The personification of Humankind is beautifully balanced between the two senses of seeing and hearing. While on the one hand he has used his eyes to ‘take measure’ (*metitus est*) of the heavens and constellations and ‘understands’ (*comprehendit*) their locations and signs, on the other, he ‘learns simultaneously’ (*condisceret*) prudence and wisdom and ‘measures’ (*metiretur*) and makes speech and music to become musical. Apuleius’ chiasmic description modulates between measuring, comprehension, learning and measuring. In addition, we are shown how sight is the direct cause of the fountain of philosophy flowing, while hearing causes humans to become musical. In the discussion of human speech, as with the fountain of philosophy, the personification expands beyond Humankind to the dual process of *ratio* and *oratio* where what ‘prudence’ (*prudencia*) has ‘planned’ (*conceperit*), ‘speech’ (*oratio*) ‘publishes’ (*promat*). Without appreciating how Apuleius personifies in this passage, we fail to do justice to the rhetorical power of the exegesis.¹⁵⁷ This methodology becomes all the more important when we move from the discussion of natural philosophy to ethics and the conceptual personifications of the Beholder of Virtue (*spectator uirtutis*) and the Sage (*sapiens*).

The Beholder of Virtue (*spectator uirtutis*) is first introduced, fittingly enough, after a general account of virtue (*Pl.* 2.11.236):

sed uirtutem liberam et in nobis sitam et nobis uoluntate adpetendam; peccata uero esse non minus libera et in nobis sita, non tamen ea suscipi uoluntate. namque ille uirtutis spectator cum eam penitus intellexerit bonam esse et benignitate praestare, ad eam affectabit profecto et sectandam existimabit sui causa; ut item ille, qui senserit uitia non solum turpitudinem existimationi

¹⁵⁷ Hijmans (1987) 462–3 directly compares this passage to the image of the music-making swan of Socrates’ dream at *Pl.* 1.1.182.

invehere, sed nocere alio pacto fraudique esse, qui potest sponte se ad eorum consortium iungere?

But [Plato asserts] that virtue is freely available and lies within us, and must be sought by us by our own will; but that sins, although no less freely available and lying within us, are things that are not taken up by our own will. For that Beholder of Virtue, when he has realised that this is completely good and distinguished for its benevolence, certainly will advance towards it and will consider it desirable for its own sake. So that, likewise, how can that same man, who believes that vices not only bring disgrace to his reputation, but are also harmful and detrimental in other respects, voluntarily join their company?

But then Apuleius imagines the Beholder of Virtue taking a wrong turn and following the path of vice (*Pl.* 2.11.236):

sed si ad eiusmodi mala pergit ac sibi usuram eorum utilem credit, deceptus errore et imagine boni sollicitatus quidem, insciens uero ad mala praecipitatur.

But if he directs his steps to such evils, and considers it beneficial for himself to utilise them, completely deceived by error and carried away by the mere image of the good, he is plunged unknowingly into evils.

The exegete then criticises this figure specifically in terms of his fall from the position of the Beholder of Virtue (*Pl.* 2.11.237):

sed illud postremae dementiae est, cum, qui uirtutis pulchritudinem oculis animae uiderit utilitatemque eius usu et ratione perspexerit, non ignarus quantum dedecoris atque incommodi adipiscatur ex participatione uitiorum, tamen addictum se uelit uitii.

But that is a most extreme madness, when he who has beheld with the eyes of the soul the beauty of virtue, and has clearly recognised its usefulness through experience and reason, while not ignorant of how much dishonour and disadvantage is obtained by participation in vices, however, he still wants to be signed over to them.

The potential fall from grace of the Beholder of Virtue paves the way for the brief cameo of the 'worst man' (*pessimus*) later (*Pl.* 2.16.241–3), but also for the extended, corrective depiction of the Sage (*sapiens*).¹⁵⁸ Apuleius introduces the *sapiens*

¹⁵⁸ Hijmans (1987) 468–9 n. 327, 'The sketch of the *pessimus* seems particularly close to the way Thrasyllus is characterised in the account of the sub-narrator at Met. 8, 1–14. Both *inuidentia* and *de alienis incommodis gaudium* play a role and so do several of the vices of the second category. Another instance is the woman of 10, 23ff.'

through a return to the topic of education. He states that for a man to be perfectly wise, he must excel other men in both *ingenium* and learning (*Pl.* 2.20.247):

perfecte sapientem esse non posse dicit Plato, nisi ceteris ingenio praestet, artibus et prudentiae partibus absolutus atque iis iam tum a pueris imbutus, factis congruentibus et dictis adsuetus, purgata et efficata animi uoluptate, eiectionis ex animo hinc * * * abstinencia atque patientia omnibusque doctrinis ex rerum scientia eloquentiaque uenientibus.

Plato says that nobody can be perfectly wise, save him who excels others in innate talent, is complete in the arts and the parts of prudence, is already imbued in them from his childhood, and is used to deeds and words that match, his soul purged and purified of pleasure, ejecting from his soul < . . . > with continence and patience and all the teachings derived from the science of things and from eloquence.

Plato's integrated conception of the innate origins and developmental education of the philosopher can be traced back to a series of passages in the *Republic* and *Theaetetus* that depict an ideal of 'philosophical nature'.¹⁵⁹ If we recall the previous discussion of education earlier in the ethical book, we can see how this account of the education of the *sapiens* is also meant to evoke the image of Plato in the biography. However, Apuleius also depicts the *sapiens* as a conceptual personification and as a character in himself in the exegesis. He proceeds to show how Plato 'gives him the name of the best' (*optimum nominat*) and he 'rightly judges him good and prudent' (*bonum ac prudentem recte arbitratur*). He 'says he is the most brave' (*fortissimum dicit*) and 'rightly thinks that he is the only wealthy man' (*diuitem hunc solum quidem recte putat*). Then we move from what Plato says or thinks of the *sapiens* to how he ought to appear and what he ought to do (*Pl.* 2.21.250):

opes etiam quia solus sapiens potest in usibus necessariis regere, uideri ditissimus debet. nam ceteri quamuis sint opibus adfluentes, tamen quod uel usum earum nesciant uel deducant eas ad pessimas partes inopes uidentur. egestatem namque non abstinencia pecuniae, sed praesentia immoderatarum cupidinum gignit. philosophum oportet, si nihil indigens erit et omnium contumax et superior iis quae homines acerba toleratu arbitrantur, nihil sic agere

¹⁵⁹ *Rep.* (486b–487a, 503c–e, 535b–d); *Theaetetus* (144a–b).

quam ut semper studeat animam corporis consortio separare, et ideo existimandam philosophiam esse mortis affectum consuetudinemque moriendi.

In addition, since only the Sage can manage wealth for what is necessary for use, he ought to seem to be the wealthiest of men. For the rest of mankind, however flowing over with riches they may be, nonetheless seem poor, because they either do not know their use, or direct them to the basest causes. For it is not starvation of money that gives birth to poverty, but the presence of excessive desires. The philosopher, if he is to lack in nothing, to resist everything and to rise above those things which men consider bitter to endure, ought to do nothing other than to strive constantly to separate the soul from its association with the body, and therefore philosophy is to be reckoned as fondness for death and familiarity with dying.

In this passage, the *sapiens* is separated from the rest of humankind, who do not know what true riches are. Then appears the figure of the Philosopher, somewhere between the ideal Sage and Humankind in general, and he is depicted in terms of what he 'ought' to do. The appearance of the Philosopher transforms this account of the Sage into a protreptic, calling on Humankind to lift themselves up from their miserable state and pursue the life of the philosopher. The figure of the Sage is not introduced by Apuleius simply as the creation of Plato in the biographical exegesis, nor is he a conceptual personification to dramatise Platonic ideas; instead he serves as a figure that allows the exegete's own voice to enter into the exegetical drama in the form of a protreptic.

Apuleius speaks: authorial protreptic

There are in fact several ways in which Apuleius the author intervenes in the drama of Platonic exegesis, between the methods of biographical exegesis and conceptual personification. Some are more akin to the 'lecture-hall atmosphere' of Alcinous' *Didaskalikos*, but others act as statements of authorial protreptic in which the reader is implicitly or explicitly called upon to follow the philosophical life. Of the former, the most typical types are moments of translation of Greek terms and the glossing of Platonic quotation; the latter occurs at several key moments in the second, ethical book.

The first explicit translation of Greek is significant because it occurs on the borderline between the biography and the exegesis, when Apuleius refers to Platonic ‘doctrines’ as *consulta* in translating Greek δόγματα (*Pl.* 1.4.189).¹⁶⁰ In this case it is specifically a translation, while throughout the text, the difference between what Plato ‘said’ and the Latin terms in the Latin text is kept at the forefront.¹⁶¹ Apuleius either supplements his account with Plato’s Greek term or glosses in Latin, so, for example, Apuleius writes that: ‘the forms of things, which [Plato] calls *ideas*’ (*rerumque formas, quas ιδέας idem [Plato] uocat, Pl.* 1.5.190) and ‘indeed *ideas*, namely the forms of everything’ (*ιδέας uero, id est formas omnium, Pl.* 1.6.192). There are also terms in which a Latin-speaking audience is alluded to through the first-person plural, such as the translation of οὐσία where Apuleius says ‘*substances* which we call *essences*’ (*οὐσίας quas essentias dicimus, Pl.* 1.6.193).¹⁶² One rare, though salient, interjection of authorial voice into the text of *De Platone* is in fact an apology for the need for new Latin philosophical terminology (*Pl.* 1.9.200):

naturasque rerum binas esse et earum alteram esse, quam quidem δοξαστήν appellat ille et quae uideri oculis et attingi manu possit, alteram, quae ueniat in mentem, cogitabilem et intellegibilem: detur enim uenia nouitati uerborum rerum obscuritatibus seruienti.

And [Plato says] that things have a double nature: one of them, which he calls *opinable*, and which can be seen with the eyes and touched with the hand, the other is that which occurs to the mind, that is ‘conceivable’ and ‘intelligible’ (pardon the novelty of vocabulary used in the service of obscure subjects).

This apology recalls Lucretius’ famous apology (*DRN* 1.136–9) on the general failure of the Latin language to do justice to

¹⁶⁰ Schmutzler (1974) 152–3. Cicero has *decreta* at *Acad.* 2.27, while both Cicero and Seneca have *decretum* for *dogma* (*Acad.* 2.29; *Ep.* 95.10). Schmutzler (1974) 153 notes the ensuing problem of the Hellenised title and also the issue of the singular. It is worth noting that Cicero (*De Fin.* 2.105) in discussing the *beata uita* notes how the *consulta atque facta* of the *sapiens* must be remembered. The same combination also occurs in *De Leg.* 1.62.

¹⁶¹ *Pl.* 1.5.190, *Pl.* 1.5.190. The *idealforma* translation is also repeated at *Pl.* 1.6.192.

¹⁶² Beaujeu (1973) 266; Hijmans (1987) 428 with n. 132.

Greek philosophical terms.¹⁶³ In addition to this Lucretian reference, there are also passages of Cicero and Seneca that proffer similar apologies.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, there is a significant Ciceronian passage on *obscuritas* which refers to the specific case of the *Timaeus*, a passage from which (*Tim.* 51d–52a) Apuleius is glossing here.¹⁶⁵ In fact, the two Latin coinages follow a Greek term that Cicero had previously adapted into Latin as *opinabile*.¹⁶⁶

Aside from translation, another key example of Apuleius' authorial presence in the narrative is when he refers to something that 'Plato says' by quoting a Greek phrase or term, typically assigned to Plato. One such case is during the discussion of wickedness, part of which I treated earlier, when anger and lust become those 'temptresses of the vices' (*uitiorum ducatrices*, *Pl.* 2.4.225) at Reason's expense. Apuleius follows this by depicting wickedness (*malitia*) as not only differing from 'goodness' (*bonitas*), but also at odds with itself in its 'dissimilarity' (*disparilitas*), 'awkwardness' (*inconcinntas*) (*Pl.* 2.4.225–6):

tres quapropter partes animae tribus dicit uitii urgeri: prudentiam indocilitas impugnat, quae non abolitionem infert scientiae, sed contraria est disciplinae discendi – huius duas ab eo species accipimus, imperitiam et fatuitatem, quarum imperitia sapientiae, fatuitas prudentiae inueniuntur inimicae – iracundiam audacia; in eius comitatum secuntur indignatio et incommobilitas – ἀσργησίαν sic interim dixerim – quae non extinguit incitamenta irarum, sed ea stupore defigit immobili.

For this reason, [Plato says] that the three parts of the soul are set upon by three vices: a resistance to teaching attacks prudence, which may not cause the destruction of knowledge, but is still adverse to the science of learning – we have received from him [Plato] two kinds of this vice, ignorance and stupidity, of which ignorance is the enemy of wisdom and stupidity that of prudence; while audacity attacks the irascible part, and into anger's company follow indignation and impassivity – as I would translate *lack of gall* – which does not extinguish the incitements of anger, but pins them down in an immovable stupor.

Here we would think that Apuleius is supplementing his own terminology with Plato's Greek, but the term is not used in

¹⁶³ Beaujeu (1973) 266, Harrison (2000) 205. ¹⁶⁴ On this *topos*, see Fögen (2000).

¹⁶⁵ *De Fin.* 2.15. ¹⁶⁶ *Cic. Ac.* 1.30–2, on which see Sedley (2012) 84–5.

Plato, but by Aristotle.¹⁶⁷ This, as we shall see in the next chapter, is part and parcel of Apuleius' incorporation of Aristotelian texts into the Platonic tradition as an extension of his master Plato's voice.

In addition to these isolated incidents of translation and quotation, there is one intriguing moment at which Apuleius interjects into his biographical exegesis a methodological point that bears consideration. In the discussion of οὐσίαι 'which we call essences' (*quas essentias dicimus*, *Pl.* 1.6.193), Apuleius recounts how Plato 'said' (*ait*) that there are two kinds: 'one which is conceived by thought alone, while the other can be submitted to the senses' (*quarum una cogitatione sola concipitur, altera sensibus subici potest*, *Pl.* 1.6.193). He then expands on Plato's division, first with a general observation (*Pl.* 1.6.193):

sed illa, quae mentis oculis comprehenditur, semper et eodem modo et sui par ac similis inuenitur ut quae uere sit; at enim altera opinione sensibili et irrationabili aestimanda est, quam nasci et interire ait.

But the former, which is perceived by the eyes of the mind, is everlasting and consistent, and equal and similar to itself, inasmuch as it is what truly exists; but the latter, which must be appraised by perceptible and irrational opinion, [Plato says] is born and perishes.

Apuleius then intervenes with the following summary (*Pl.* 1.6.193):

et, sicut superior uere esse memoratur, hanc non esse uere possumus dicere.

And in the same way as the former is celebrated as truly existing, just so the latter we can say does not truly exist.

Apuleius then discusses the two *essentiae* or *substantiae*, the first of which are god, matter and the forms, while the 'secondary essences' (*secundae substantiae*) 'derive their origin from the pattern of the former/higher substance' (*quae ab substantiae superioris exemplo originem ducunt*), Apuleius extends this division to the topic of 'discussion' (*disputatio*) itself as a 'discipline' (*disciplina*) (*Pl.* 1.6.194):

¹⁶⁷ Aristotle *EN* II.7, 1107b. On this conflation, see Moreschini (1978) 107–8.

adhuc illa, quam dixi, intelligendi substantia quoniam constanti nititur robore, etiam quae de ea disputantur ratione stabili et fide plena sunt. at eius, quae ueluti umbra et imago est superioris, rationes quoque et uerba, quae de ea disputantur, inconstanti sunt disciplina.

Moreover, that, as I have said, is the substance of intellectual understanding, since it rests on a solid foundation, so disputes relating to it are filled with secure reasoning and assurance. But of the other, which is like the shadow and image of the former, the very rationales and words used in disputes relating to it are expressed by an uncertain science.

The cross-reference – as I have said (*quam dixi*) – may seem innocuous enough, as a summarising statement, sending us back to the topic (*illa*) in the earlier description, but it also offers a hint to Apuleius' exegetical methodology elsewhere in the handbook. The movement from 'Plato said' to 'we are able to say' to 'I have said', that is, from biographical exegesis to authorial protreptic, takes place at various vital moments in the narrative. Furthermore, what is especially intriguing about this *quam dixi* is that it intervenes precisely when the topic concerns the role of exegesis. When disputing the intelligible realm, the exegete can afford to 'speak' beyond Plato's authority precisely because the topic itself is one that is based on 'firm reasoning and true belief'. Yet with the sensible realm, the exegete is on slippery ground and so *rationes* and *uerba* are under pressure. Moreover, here we have a very different configuration of On the *ratio*/*ratio* duality of the pivotal image of philosophy's birth and creation.

There are also more subtle interventions in the exegesis that, while not directly showing the author intervening in the narrative, nonetheless demonstrate how the explicit work of Plato is explained. Once again the question of methodology becomes apparent. We can recall the opening of Book 1 and Plato's debate with himself about the nature of matter (i.e. the question of its corporeality). After he has had Plato posit both options, of corporeality or non-corporeality, Apuleius intervenes as follows (*Pl.* 1.5.192):

sed ui et ratione sibi eam uideri corpoream, atque ideo nec tactu solo neque tamen sola opinione cogitationis intellegi. namque corpora, propter insignem

euidentiā sui, simili iudicio cognosci, sed quae substantiam non habent corporum, ea cogitationibus uideri. unde adulterata opinione ambigūam materiae huius intellegi qualitatem.

But practically and rationally, it seems to be corporeal, and it is for this reason that it can be understood, neither by touch alone nor alone by conjecture of thought. Indeed bodies, through their own manifest evidence, are known by similar judgement, while those things which lack corporeal substance can be perceived by thoughts. Whereby, through a counterfeit conjecture the ambiguous quality of this matter can be apprehended.

Apuleius takes on Plato's account of the 'ambiguous quality of the matter' (*ambigūam materiae qualitatem*) and 'δοξα' (*opinio*), and presents his own solutions. The pertinent point here is, once again, the role of *ratio* in the process of enabling the exegete to reach the intelligible realm. It is the predominance of this rationalising process that paves the way for the authorial exegesis to turn into a form of protreptic; whereby Apuleius at the same time as expounding Platonism, calls for his readers to turn to philosophy as a whole.

There are two modes of protreptic proper in *De Platone*: implicit and explicit.¹⁶⁸ The address to Faustinus that opens the second, ethical book, and *De mundo*, heralds an explicit protreptic, in that it states, proves and convinces someone to adopt the philosophy (*Pl.* 2.1.219):

moralis philosophiae caput est, Faustine fili, ut scias quibus ad beatam uitam perueniri rationibus possit. uerum ut beatitudinem bonorum fine ante alia contingere putes, ostendam quae de hoc Plato senserit.

The fundamental objective of moral philosophy, Faustinus my son, is that you know what makes it possible to achieve the happy life. But so you can reckon that happiness, in the end, comes before other goods, I shall show what Plato thought about this matter.

The explicit protreptic is found in the targeting of Faustinus as Apuleius teaches him so he 'may know' (*ut scias*) how to arrive at the good life.¹⁶⁹ Yet Apuleius immediately pre-empts

¹⁶⁸ On this classification, see Slings (1999) 61–2.

¹⁶⁹ The address to Faustinus here, and not at the beginning of the first book, has meant that the second book has been understood as the second edition of *Pl.* by Barra (1966) 159, and supported by Göransson (1995) 140 with n. 3. Barra's hypothesis is that we have the first book of an *editio prior* and the second book of an *editio*

what his son 'thinks' he may reckon (*putes*) about blessedness, by turning to his Platonic lesson. It is as if Apuleius' use of explicit protreptic means that there is the possibility of teacher and pupil getting ahead of themselves and they both need to return to the biographical exegesis to ground their respective roles.

Explicit protreptic is also used at moments when Apuleius is singling out a particular form of moral action that he disapproves of, while implicit protreptic is more generally used to include all of humankind. We may recall the cameo of the *spectator uirtutis* and how he fluctuated between following virtue and following vice. Amid this portrait, Apuleius addresses the fallen *spectator* directly (*Pl.* 2.11.236):

discrepes quippe a communi sententia, si non quidem ignores quid pauperiem ac diuitias intersit et, cum haec in procliui sita sint nec pauperies honestatem uel turpitudinem diuitiae allaturae sint, si egestatem rerum uictui necessariarum copiis praeferas ineptire uidearis; et adhuc illud absurdus, si quis sanitatem corporis spernat eligens morbos.

For you would certainly disagree with common opinion, if indeed you were not ignorant of the difference between poverty and wealth, though these things are readily attainable, and poverty will not bring honour, nor wealth disgrace, and yet if you preferred poverty in the things necessary for living to their plentiful supply, you would seem stupid; and still more absurd would it be if someone, despising the health of the body, chose disease instead.

The direct address to the fallen *spectator* is a unique moment in the exegesis when Apuleius the exegete isolates a particular case of failed moral action.

As for implicit protreptic, we can see it at work in the change from the biographical exegesis in various passages in *De Platone* to the use of the first person plural, as Apuleius' authorial protreptic entails his joining with his audience to make generalising statements about humankind.¹⁷⁰ For example, Apuleius makes this transition in the discussion of which goods Plato

posterior, as in the inverse of Cicero's *Academica*. This is rejected by Beaujeu (1973) 53.

¹⁷⁰ Slings (1999) 61, 'Any argument, description of behaviour, apology, myth or other type of philosophical text can be designed to cause its readers or characters to change their moral conduct or to pursue philosophy.'

argues are to be sought after in themselves and which are not (*Pl.* 2.10.235):

bonorum autem quaedam sui gratia asserit appetenda, ut beatitudinem, ut bonum gaudium; alia non sui, ut medicinam; alia et sui et alterius, ut prouidentiam ceterasque uirtutes, quas et sui causa expetimus ut praestantes per se et honestas et alterius, id est beatitudinis, qui uirtutum exoptatissimus fructus est.

Of goods, Plato asserts that there are some that must be striven for in themselves, such as blessedness and honest enjoyment; others not in themselves, such as medicine; still others in themselves and for something else, such as foresight, and other virtues, which we seek after both for their own sake, since they are excellent and honourable in themselves, and for the sake of something else, viz. blessedness, which is the most wished for fruit of the virtues.

Observe how Apuleius moves from a discussion of which goods Plato ‘asserts’ (*asserit*) should be sought after and why, to the virtues that ‘we seek’ (*expetimus*) for their own sake. It is as if, in the midst of Plato’s lesson, Apuleius’ imagined audience has joined in to prove the master’s point right. Yet the most significant moment of implicit protreptic appears towards the end of the work in the discussion of what constitutes the ‘happy life’ or ‘blessedness’ (*beatitudo*), as outlined in the programmatic address to Faustinus (*Pl.* 2.23.253):

una quidem beatitudo est, cum ingenii nostri praesentia tutamur quae perficimus; alia, cum ad perfectionem uitae nihil deest atque ipsa sumus contemplatione contenti. utrarumque autem felicitatum origo ex uirtute manat. et ad ornamentum quidem genialis loci est uirtutis nullis extrinsecus eorum quae bona ducimus adminiculis indigemus.

Indeed, one kind of blessedness is when we protect what we accomplish through the presence of our innate qualities; while the other is when the perfection of life lacks nothing and we are happy with contemplating it. However, the origin of each kind of happiness flows from virtue. And, in fact, to the adornment of the pleasant position that is virtue, we require no auxiliary supports outside of what we consider goods.

The discussion of the happy life demands that the author Apuleius include himself in the protreptic discourse he is expounding, and it is only after a full appreciation of Apuleius’ methodology, in terms of the various voices of *De Platone*, that we can fully appreciate the particular force of this ‘we’ thinking

protreptic.¹⁷¹ Furthermore, Apuleius' emphasis on the protective role of 'the presence of our innate qualities' (*cum ingenii nostri praesentia*) for the happy life works as an even more powerful protreptic if we recall the trajectory that began with Plato's innate *ingenium* in the biography, via the discussion of *ingenium* that opens Book 2, to the *ingenium* of the *sapiens*. The nuances of Apuleius' methodology in *De Platone*, therefore, are the heart of his particular impersonation of philosophy that bridges the biographical and handbook genres of the work. From this position in the ethical book, we can now see more clearly how the opening biography of Plato and its grounding of the biographical exegesis already enacted an implicit protreptic. Therefore, the transformation of that core biographical exegesis, via the emergence of Apuleius' conceptual personification of the *sapiens*, climaxes with the explicit authorial protreptic of this passage on the happy life.

¹⁷¹ For a discussion of 'we' thinking in philosophical discourse, see Henderson (2006).

CHAPTER 3

UNIVERSAL READING AND DAEMONIC INTERPRETATION

(*De mundo* and *De deo Socratis*)

Apuleius' Platonic Universe

Apuleius' cosmological treatise, *De mundo* ('On the Universe'), and demonological lecture, *De deo Socratis* ('On the god of Socrates') join his handbook, *De Platone*, as the only surviving 'philosophical works' of his corpus.¹ Attempts to make sense of these three texts as a group have hitherto been limited to a quest for doctrinal homogeneity – the 'shape' of Apuleius' Platonism – in their respective discussions of Platonic natural philosophy in general (*De Platone* Book 1), cosmology and theology (*De mundo*) and demonology (*De deo Socratis*).² This approach relies on treating the works as parts of a greater whole, where each is asked to chime in on particular topics.³ For example, all have something to contribute to Apuleius' conception of the supreme deity, including the *Apologia* as well, while *De deo Socratis* holds forth on demonology, supported only by passing references in *De Platone* (1.11.204–6) and a brief, albeit important discussion in *De mundo* (24.343; 27.350–1), which supplements its Greek model on this topic.⁴

Beyond this doctrinal approach, it has been the differences between these texts that have been emphasised, even when discussed as a group or when separated, for example, into two works of philosophical exposition (the handbook *De Platone*

¹ For a humbling portrait of the depth and range of Apuleius' philosophical output had it all survived, see Hijmans (1987) 398.

² Regen (1971); Moreschini (1978); Gersh (1986); Hijmans (1987).

³ This is the fruitful approach of Gersh (1986) and Hijmans (1987).

⁴ For a useful comparative table of the discussions of the supreme god in *Pl.*, *Mu.*, *Soc.*, and *Apol.* and its implications, see Hijmans (1987) 436–9. For the significance of what Gersh (1986) 277 calls 'Apuleius' deviations from the Greek original... in terms of his demonological interests', see Regen (1971) 23–83, and support of Beaujeu (1973) 329–32 and Moreschini (1978) 204–5.

and treatise *De mundo*) and one of popular philosophical lecture (*De deo Socratis*).⁵ This latter approach has even allowed for the lecture *De deo Socratis* to migrate to the 'rhetorical' half of the corpus.⁶ Furthermore, the relationship of these works to certain Greek predecessors (known, assumed or conjectured) has also been at the forefront of discussion, both individually and as a group.⁷ *De Platone* has been approached in terms of its source or sources, while *De mundo* is a translation, albeit with some major changes, of an extant Greek work transmitted as a work of Aristotle, called *Peri kosmou*. As for *De deo Socratis*, its closeness to two lectures by Maximus of Tyre and its shared topic with a work of Plutarch has been central to its appreciation.

In spite of these dominant approaches, as the last chapter showed, there is another way to understand Apuleius' Platonism as a unifying factor in his heterogeneous literary corpus: examination of his methodology. As we have seen, the interplay between biographical exegesis, conceptual personification and authorial protreptic at work in *De Platone* is not only grounded in the opening biography of Plato but also in the impersonation of philosophy enacted through the powerful and pervasive image of Plato's aestheticised birth of the *corpus* of philosophy and its filing down with *ratio* and dressing up with *oratio*. A move from the *what* to the *how* of Apuleius' Platonism can also be fruitful for a reading of *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis*. Yet each of these works offers its own distinct manifestation of this move and we should not expect the methodologies employed in *De Platone* to translate perfectly onto these works. While the doctrinal approach searches for a homogeneous picture of the 'shape' of Apuleius' Platonism across his works, focus on the basic methodological structure and strategies of individual

⁵ Sandy (1997) discusses all three together in his chapter: *Philosophus Sophisticus Latinus*, but, as the chapter title suggests, the emphasis is on *Soc.* Harrison (2000) pools *Pl.* and *Mu.* under the title 'Philosophical Exposition', while discussing *Soc.* alone as 'Popular Philosophy'.

⁶ As reflected by its inclusion in the translations of Apuleius' 'rhetorical' works: Harrison, Hilton and Hunink (2001).

⁷ Given his study of the 'Greek world' of Apuleius, Sandy (1997) emphasises this issue, as does Harrison (2000).

works in the corpus must accommodate, relish, and even celebrate, differences of approach for each text. In many ways, such differences can also be accounted for by a consideration of a basic difference between *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis* on the one hand and *De Platone* on the other.

As we saw in the last chapter, *De Platone* is a handbook of Platonism that grounds its pedagogic authority in the figure of Plato, from the opening biography to the core method of biographical exegesis, from which the variation of conceptual personification and authorial protreptic springs. This methodological model is at once abandoned by both *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis* because, in spite of some key moments, Plato's authority is not the foundation to these works. In *De mundo*, while Plato's agency does play a key role at the very end of the work, in a translated quotation from the *Laws*, the basic exegetical mode is that of offering a description of the Universe from a variety of perspectives. In *De deo Socratis* there is a more complicated dynamic between the character of the exegete Apuleius and Plato's authority, especially in moments of impersonation when Apuleius asks his audience to imagine they are hearing Plato's 'very own opinion' (*sententia sua*) through the exegete's 'own voice' (*mea uoce*, *Soc.* 6.132) or Plato's 'divine opinion' (*diuina sententia*) through the exegete as 'interpreter' (*me interprete*, *Soc.* 16.155). This difference is, furthermore, bound up with how both works explicitly expand the limits of Platonism beyond what Plato said, to incorporate other figures into the Platonic tradition: Aristotle (and Theophrastus) in *De mundo* and Socrates in *De deo Socratis*. While the doctrinal approach to *De Platone* can point to the eclecticism of his brand of Platonic doctrine, with borrowings from Peripatetic and Stoic theories, this approach does not trouble the rhetorical aims of Plato's authority for his Platonism. Yet, the explicit reference to the roles of Aristotle (and Theophrastus) in *De mundo* and the constant recalling of Socrates in *De deo Socratis* demand an expansion of Plato's explicitly Platonic base. Nonetheless, these other 'Platonic' figures do not simply offer an alternative authority to Plato; we do not discover what Aristotle or Socrates 'said'. Rather we encounter the methodologies we

saw emerge in *De Platone* – conceptual personification and authorial protreptic – as the key players in both texts and, most importantly, grounding their particular impersonations of philosophy. We saw how the impersonation of philosophy that emerges from the image of Plato's aestheticised corpus in *De Platone* tells the reader how to move from the life of Plato to his philosophy and from Apuleius' biography to his methodology of biographical exegesis. The comparable image in *De mundo* is that of the imagined flight of a personified Philosophy which dictates the main methodological division in *De mundo* between what I shall call 'mundane description' and 'universal reading' in the split between the cosmological and theological sections of the treatise. In *De deo Socratis*, on the other hand, Apuleius' call for his audience to cultivate their inner *daemones* (glossed as their embodied, immortal souls), as a cultivation of an 'oath of allegiance to philosophy' (*philosophiae sacramentum*, *Soc.* 22.170), grounds the whole demonological topic of the lecture in a forceful ethical protreptic for Apuleius' audience, on how to live by taking the turn to philosophy.

These two images of the flight of a personified Philosophy and the protreptic call for an oath of allegiance to philosophy work like the image of the 'body' of philosophy in *De Platone*. Both pave the way for a reading of these works in terms of methodology, beyond conflation through doctrine or division through differences in genre or Greek models. In other words, we have seen how in *De Platone* the image of the body of philosophy, as filed by reason and dressed up with discourse, articulates a constant tension within Platonic philosophy as portrayed, and enacted, in the handbook to come, between Plato's authority and his creation of other voices. For *De mundo* this tension is played out according to a synergy between human and divine perspectives, which enables the former to resemble the latter, in the 'flight' of Philosophy. This image makes sense of the division of an all-encompassing treatment of the nature of the Universe such as the treatise *De mundo* between a description of earthly phenomena and a eulogy to the pervasive power of the Universal Ruler (*rector mundi*). To accommodate these two aims, *De mundo* adopts

differing exegetical methodologies. For the former, he offers a broadly impersonal mode of presentation that aims to describe the state of affairs of the Universe as they are. For the latter, there is a more involved engagement with the supreme cosmic force. Both modes are outlined in the preface to the work, where a personified description of Philosophy mediates between the lowly affairs of humankind and the lofty heights of the divine. The figure of Philosophy, therefore, operates as the source of both description and eulogy in what I dub Apuleius' universal reading. Apuleius imagines this flight of Philosophy, through which humankind can rise above its limited, mundane perspective and survey the Universe as a whole. While there are glimpses of this approach in the opening half of the treatise, the method reaches its climax with the detailed discussion of the Universal Ruler (*rector mundi*) in the second half, and culminates in a translation of Plato's crowning depiction of him in a passage from the *Laws*. This passage makes a direct parallel between the catascopia enabled by Philosophy's flight and the perspective of the Universal Ruler.⁸

For *De deo Socratis*, the tension operates according to the dynamic between natural philosophy and ethical philosophy, epitomised by the image of the cultivated *daemon* as the oath of allegiance to philosophy. Apuleius resists the topic of the supreme deity to focus on a topic more suited to what he calls 'his mediocrity' (*mediocritatem meam*, *Soc.* 3.124): that of *daemones* who mediate between gods and men. He then shows how his interpretation of Plato's celestial wisdom for his audience means that he occupies a daemonic position in his lecture. But the discussion of the *daimonion* of Socrates and the concluding protreptic transforms this daemonic role of the exegete into that of spokesman for philosophy in general. *De deo Socratis* has a consistently engaging personality at the helm, one who actively mediates between his topic and his audience in a variety of ways. Of these the most crucial is when he parallels his own role with that of the intermediary *daemones*.

⁸ For a comparable approach to this 'cosmic viewpoint', albeit with differing results for Seneca's *Natural Questions*, see Williams (2012).

Furthermore, after outlining the Platonic Universe and introducing *daemones*, the lecture rises to a mighty crescendo with the exemplary figure of Socrates and his *daimonion*, concluding with an impassioned call to turn to philosophy.

These differences in methodology could be explained away by difference in genre: treatise vs lecture. The former could be described as a more matter-of-fact genre, expounding a particular topic manual-style, while the latter would seem to be a more rhetorically sophisticated genre that aims to reach a live audience. But in this chapter I argue that these works are exegetes of specifically Platonic philosophy and that their differing exegetical modes and the different characters of their respective exegetes are the direct results of the particular strand of Platonism each expounds. That is, *De mundo*, in following Aristotle (and Theophrastus) as specifically Platonic extensions of the *Timaeus*, demands one approach, while *De deo Socratis*, which returns to the figure of Socrates and his ethical role within a Platonic frame, requires another. Furthermore, the topics expounded have a profound effect on the characters of the exegetes. Whereas the exegete of *De mundo* promotes the catascopic (i.e. downward looking) perspective of Philosophy in flight to offer his total, universal reading, the exegete of *De deo Socratis* parallels the intermediary, daemonic figures in his interpretation of Platonic theory and more explicitly mediates between men and gods.

Once we recognise these broad brushstrokes in both of these works, we can begin to appreciate some of the confusions caused by the homogeneous doctrinal approach and also the implications of replacing Plato with other figures from the Platonic tradition: Aristotle and Socrates. Before my readings of the two texts, let me intervene in these debates to show how a methodologically sensitive approach will offer new insights.

Theology, cosmology and demonology

De mundo and *De deo Socratis*, in spite of their manifold differences, could be considered together according to a particular, albeit vague, type of Platonic writing in the period: writing on

Platonic themes.⁹ Beyond the main strands of Platonic writing in the Imperial period, such as commentaries, handbooks and biographies, there are numerous works that have been described as on Platonic themes, ranging from treatises, such as Numenius' *On the Good* or Taurus' *On corporeality and incorporeality*, to lectures, such as those of Maximus of Tyre, on topics such as demonology and Socrates' *daimonion*. While 'works on Platonic themes' is admittedly a vague category under which to discuss *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis*, it does exemplify the vital difference between how such works address (or wear) their Platonism as opposed to other forms of Platonic writing, such as translations, biographies and handbooks. Unlike *De Platone* and Alcinous' *Didaskalikos*, neither *De mundo* nor *De deo Socratis* consistently ground their discussion of Platonic topics in the explicit authority of Plato. The biographical exegesis of *De Platone* is, with some significant exceptions, by no means the core methodological option of the cosmological treatise or the demonological lecture. In many ways, therefore, the category 'Platonic themes' stretches the very conception of Platonism in two related directions: first to encompass the sense of a recognisably Platonic area of investigation (e.g. Platonic cosmology and demonology) and, second, to factor in particular legacies of Platonism such as Socratism and Aristotelianism.

In following the Aristotelian *Peri kosmou* and recalling the example of Socrates' *daimonion*, both *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis* depict a specifically Platonic Universe.¹⁰ At its most basic formulation, Plato's Universe is systematic and hierarchical, explained by a superlative divine category, while humankind's place within the hierarchy depends upon the immortality of his soul.¹¹ The top-down interconnectedness of the Platonic Universe through the immortal soul confers on it an explicitly ethical dimension.¹² Whether through the

⁹ On this, admittedly vague, genre, see Dörrie and Baltes (1993) 62–92, 243–340.

¹⁰ For a stimulating overview of Platonic cosmology, as grounded in the *Timaeus-Critias*, see Johansen (2004).

¹¹ Gerson (2005) lists six fundamental features of Platonism, which include these features of the Platonic universe.

¹² For the specifically ethical dimension of the Platonic universe, see Carone (2005).

idea of 'becoming like god' or through cultivation of one's *daemon*, Platonism demands the (proto-Stoic) alignment between human action and the ordered Universe.¹³ Apuleius seems to conceive of gods, *daemones* and humans as constituting the three realms and the formal hierarchy of the Platonic Universe. But once we attempt to conflate the individual treatments of these theories in *De Platone*, *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis*, we encounter a friction, caused, I will argue, by their differing aims and the consequential methodological choices these aims entail. While the details of these differences will be explored in depth in the discussion of each work later in this chapter, let me now give the example of Apuleius' discussion of the Platonic theory of the supreme god.

The theory of the supreme deity can be approached by pooling all our references to it and making sense of them as a unified doctrine.¹⁴ A more nuanced approach would be to 'classify them according to the manner of description', in which differences of emphasis can be explained by a distinction between 'subjective' and 'objective' descriptions of the supreme deity.¹⁵ And if we take this latter approach further, we shall be in a position to appreciate how specific Apuleius' methodological choices are. In *De Platone* (1.5.190–1.6.193), we have already encountered how the supreme god was described amid a range of approaches to Plato's authority – what I called Apuleius' method of biographical exegesis. Apuleius called on Plato's own words, what he says and calls certain things, as well as evoking a series of philosophical opinions. In this way, Apuleius' discussion of the ineffable nature of the supreme god is, therefore, completely bound up with Plato's own authority. Yet, a little later in the first book, Apuleius refers back to this passage in terms that expand on the authority of Plato, who 'lists three kinds of gods' (*deorum trinas nuncupat species*, *Pl.* 1.11.204). He refers to the previous depiction of the supreme god as what 'we have shown above' (*superius ostendimus*, *Pl.* 1.11.204), then how 'we name' other deities 'heaven-dwelling'

¹³ For Stoicising terminology in *De mundo*, see Lapidge (1989) 1418–21.

¹⁴ As tabulated and discussed at Hijmans (1987) 436–9. ¹⁵ Gersh (1986) 266.

(*caelicolas nominamus*, *Pl.* 1.11.204) and how *daemones* are ‘those called “in-betweeners” by the archaic Romans’ (*quos medioximos Romani ueteres appellant*, *Pl.* 1.11.204–5). This cross-reference, while re-reading the earlier account in terms of other voices, emphasises the authority of Plato by extending it.¹⁶ Yet the accounts of the supreme god in *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis* both emphasise qualities of the supreme god beyond Plato’s authority and, in different ways, highlight how the ineffable god must be discussed and perceived from a variety of perspectives. In each case, treatment of the supreme god is bound up with the methodological strategies – and the images of the impersonation of philosophy – singular to each work.

The most extended account of the supreme deity is delivered by *De mundo* and will be treated in some detail below. For now, here is how Apuleius transitions to his account of the figure he dubs the Universal Ruler (*rector mundi*) (*Mu.* 24.341–2):

restat, quod caput est sermonis huius, ut super mundi rectore uerba faciamus. indigens quippe orationis huius uidebatur ratio, nisi de mundo reputantes, etsi minus curiose, at quoquo modo possemus, de deo diceremus.

As the principal theme of this treatise we still need to say something about the Universal Ruler. Certainly the point of this presentation would seem to be lacking something if we did not, when contemplating the nature of the Universe, speak about god – albeit less meticulously, but nonetheless as best we can.

Given that the synergy between *ratio* and *oratio* has been a consistent trope in Apuleius’ Platonic corpus, it is especially pertinent here that Apuleius aligns the ostensible ‘point’ (i.e. rationale, *ratio*) of the ‘presentation’ (*oratio*) with the god as the Universal Ruler. Apuleius proceeds next to describe the Universal Ruler in various ways, some of which are familiar from the account in *De Platone*. But what I want to emphasise here is how Apuleius comments on the problem of discussing this deity, ‘albeit less meticulously, but nonetheless as best we can’ (*etsi minus curiose, at quoquo modo possemus*). Aside

¹⁶ Gersh (1986) 266 misleadingly refers to a later point in *Pl.* 1.6.193, when Apuleius is explaining substance as God.

from exciting readers of the *Metamorphoses* with a taste of the key theme of *curiositas*, this caveat intimates a certain reticence in the face of the supreme deity that contrasts with the confident glosses on Plato's authorised account of the deity in *De Platone*.¹⁷ It also chimes with the image of the personified Philosophy at the opening of the work, in terms of the limited human access to the divine.

Now, to move on to *De deo Socratis*, the whole section on the supreme god is itself a *recusatio* of the topic, in favour of that of *daemones*. *De deo Socratis*, in choosing to focus on the intermediary *daemones* and their place in the Universe, rather than the *rector mundi*, adopts a different exegetical strategy, specifically through the role played by Plato in the text. In this *recusatio* (*Soc.* 3.124–5) Apuleius emphasises how Plato, who is 'endowed with a heavenly eloquence' (*caelesti facundia praeditus*) contrasts the 'poverty of human speech' (*penuria sermonis humani*). But he continues by claiming that 'no words have proved adequate for the magnitude of the matter, and not only in my own case, but for my master Plato too' (*in quo non mihi quidem tantum, sed ne Platoni quidem meo quiverunt ulla uerba pro amplitudine rei suppetere*). So instead he will 'sound a retreat before subjects which far exceed my mediocrity, and finally call my speech down from heaven to earth' (*ac iam rebus mediocritatem meam longe superantibus receptui canam tandemque orationem de caelo in terram deuocabo*, *Soc.* 3.124). This astonishing passage pre-empts the transition from the account of the gods to the *daemones* to come by insisting on difference between Plato and the exegete's role. In other words, to borrow the terms from the previous chapter, there is a clear tension between biographical exegesis and authorial protreptic, wherein the former is marked as somehow more divine than the latter. While both have a limited grasp on the supreme deity, Plato's heavenly eloquence is contrasted with

¹⁷ The use of the adverb *curiose* here could compare with Lucius' arrival in Thessaly and 'meticulously examining everything he saw' (*curiose singula considerabam*, *Met.* 2.1). An even more pertinent cross-reference would be to Apuleius' quotation of a part of Ennius' *Hedyphagetica* to reflect on the varieties of fish which the poet 'obviously knew about in great detail' (*quae scilicet curiose cognorat*, *Apol.* 39.2).

the exegete's 'mediocrity'.¹⁸ Note as well that, given the inability of both Apuleius and Plato to discuss the topic, the theme of *daemones* suits their limited human capacities, whereas the supreme deity is out of their reach. In several other passages that follow in the discussion of Platonic demonology, Apuleius proceeds to align his topic with his access to Plato and his mediation of Plato's heavenly wisdom for his audience. This approach means that the exegete positions himself not above his material, but in its midst. That is, his brand of authorial protreptic enacts not a universal reading but a daemonic interpretation which concludes with the conflation of the oath of allegiance to philosophy with the cultivation of the *daemon* that is the immortal soul.

My brief comparison of the accounts of the supreme god in *De Platone*, *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis* illustrates the need to appreciate the core methodological differences between each of these works, especially in terms of their guiding conception of the impersonation of philosophy. For *De mundo*, the flight of Philosophy enacts a top-down (catascopic) perspective of universal reading.¹⁹ As for *De deo Socratis*, the intermediary approach to the interpretation of the Universe in terms of ethical considerations is emphasised. These contrasting approaches also make sense of Apuleius' expansion of the Platonic limits of these works beyond the authority of Plato. This is realised not only in the shape of the conceptual personification of Philosophy in *De mundo* or of the authorial protreptic voice of the mediating exegete in *De deo Socratis*, but also in ways that expand a conception of Platonism beyond Plato. In short, *De mundo* looks towards the later developments of 'Platonism' by Aristotle – *De deo Socratis*, to 'Platonic' origins in Socrates. Both gestures are less a negation of Plato's authority, than a reiteration of the methodological choices already traced

¹⁸ My emphasis on Apuleius' play with his 'mediocrity' was initially informed by Trzaskoma (2003).

¹⁹ Catascopia is an especially important theme in Apuleius' near-contemporary, Lucian. The *True History* is a parody of the catascopic claims of philosophers. For Lucian's references to the roots of catascopia in Plato (*Phaedr.* 247d; *Phd.* 109e), see Anderson (1976) 7 n. 51. In general, see Romm (1994) 127–8.

in outline as employed in each work. Indeed, in asking why Apuleius adopts different methodological strategies in describing the Platonic Universe in *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis*, the choice of roles for Aristotle and Socrates proves to be illuminating and bound up with broader methodological concerns.

Plato, Aristotle and Socrates

*Platonism is, in a sense, bigger than Plato*²⁰

In the previous chapter we saw that no matter how eclectic the doctrine propounded in *De Platone*, Apuleius claims to speak for Plato.²¹ Even when the biographical exegesis splinters into other shards of conceptual personification and authorial protreptic, the core grounding in Plato's authority remains an assured and intact presence throughout the handbook's narrative. While this secures *De Platone* as the core of Apuleius' Platonic corpus and as the heart of his Platonism, does it follow that his Platonism is limited to this extreme of explicitness? In other words, does the presence of *De Platone* in the Apuleian corpus mean that we are to understand Platonism therein as limited to what Apuleius' literally claims, *totidem uerbis*, for what 'Plato said'?²² Gerson in his succinct discussion of 'What is Platonism?' pinpoints a disjunction between 'what Plato said' and 'what Plato meant' in the circumstance that Plato's employment of dialogue form means that he hardly 'says' anything directly.²³ But for Apuleius, who in *De Platone* enacts an explicit biographical exegesis of what 'Plato said', a Platonism without Plato would seem absurd. Nonetheless, in neither *De mundo* nor *De deo Socratis* is the impersonation of Plato, as in *De Platone*, the core methodology. Nor is it simply replaced by other 'Platonic' figures. Instead Apuleius declares that he 'follows' Aristotle (and Theophrastus) in his account of the Platonic Universe and 'recalls' the example of Socrates

²⁰ Gerson (2005) 257.

²¹ On the question of the doctrinal eclecticism of imperial Platonism, see Dillon and Long (1988).

²² Gerson (2005) 253 calls this explicit Platonism 'the purely phenomenological approach'.

²³ On the question of who speaks for Plato in the dialogues, see Press (2000).

in his exposition of Platonic demonology. These works, therefore, enact a core ‘impersonation’ operating within Platonism itself, first, by the extension of the tradition beyond Plato, to Aristotle (and, to a lesser extent, Theophrastus), and, second, by re-energising the Platonic tradition, through a return to its origins in the figure of Socrates.

In following Aristotle and Theophrastus in his description of the Platonic Universe in *De mundo*, Apuleius remains consistent with his depiction of both philosophers as Platonists elsewhere in his corpus. During the discussion of fish in the *Apolo-gia*, Apuleius explains his scientific studies on the nature of fish by pointing to ancient philosophers who did the same (*Apol.* 36.3–4):

legat ueterum philosophorum monumenta, tandem ut intellegat non me primum haec requisisse, sed iam pridem maiores meos, Aristotelen dico et Theophrastum et Eudemum et Lyconem ceterosque Platonis minores, qui plurimos libros de genitu animalium deque uictu deque particulis deque omni differentia reliquerunt.

Let him read the great works of the old philosophers, so that he can at last understand that I am not the first to have inquired into these things, but that before me my forebearers, by whom I mean Aristotle, Theophrastus, Eudemus and Lyco and the other lesser followers of Plato, who have bequeathed many books on the reproduction of animals, their means of living, their parts and all of their differences.

Apuleius playfully marks out a philosophical hierarchy here by calling his group of philosophers his ‘betters’ or ‘masters’ (*maiores*), but at the same time making them ‘lesser’ (*minores*), as followers of Plato.²⁴ Apuleius also concludes this section of his defence by reiterating the partnership between Plato and Aristotle as instigators of his own philosophical researches (*Apol.* 41.7):

at quidem hoc negotium ex lectione et aemulatione Aristoteli nactus sum, nonnihil et Platone meo adhortante, qui ait eum, qui ista uestiget, ἀμεταμέλητον παιδιδάιν ἐν βίῳ παίζειν.²⁵

²⁴ For the problems of this grouping and specifically the case of Eudemus, see White (2002).

²⁵ I follow Hunink (1997) with Helm’s correction *at quidem* for the transmitted *ut quidem*. For his rationale, see Hunink (1997) 126.

But indeed I discovered this business from a reading and emulation of Aristotle, and by the exhortation of my Plato, who says that the person who tracks down these things *plays a game in his life that cannot be regretted*.

Here the quotation from the *Timaeus* insinuates another hint about the particular collocation of Plato and Aristotle in terms of conceptions of Platonic cosmology. Later in the speech, Apuleius moves from an exposition of Plato's account of epilepsy in the *Timaeus* with additional comments from Aristotle's *Problemata* and other works of Theophrastus.²⁶ Finally, if we look to *De deo Socratis*, Apuleius incorporates Aristotle's views into another account reliant on the *Timaeus*, this time on the fourfold division of beings in the Universe and Apuleius' assignment of *daemones* to the air (*aer*) (*Soc.* 8.138):

nam cum quattuor sint elementa notissima, ueluti quadrifariam natura magnis partibus disternata, sintque propria animalia terrarum, aquarum, flammarum, – siquidem Aristoteles auctor est in fornacibus flagrantibus quaedam propria animalia, pennulis apta uolitare totumque aeuum suum in igne deuersari, cum eo exoriri cumque eo extingui, – praeterea cum totiuga sidera, ut iam prius dictum est, sursum in aethere, id est in ipso liquidissimo ignis ardore, compareant, cur hoc solum quartum elementum aeris, quod tanto spatio intersitum est, cassum ab omnibus, desertum a cultoribus suis natura pateretur, quin in eo quoque aeria animalia gignerentur, ut in igni flammida, in unda fluxa, in terra glebulenta?

For, since there are four of the most recognisable elements, just as Nature has been separated out fourfold into her major parts, and since there are animals that belong to different lands, waters, fires – if, at any rate, Aristotle is an authority there are certain small animals native to burning furnaces, flying around with their fitted wings and spending their whole life as a lodger in fire, that come into being with it and are destroyed with it – and especially since so many grouped stars, as has been stated earlier, appear up above in the *aether*, i.e. in that purest blaze of fire, – then why would Nature permit only this fourth element of air, which is situated in such a great space, to be void of everything, to be deserted by its own inhabitants, so that airy animals do not come to being in it too, just as fiery animals do in fire, fluid animals in water and earthly animals on land?

²⁶ *Apol.* 51. The works of Theophrastus mentioned are not extant, while Aristotle's *Problemata* as we have it contains no discussion of epilepsy, although, see Van der Eijk (2005) 17 for the suggestion that Aristotle elsewhere does have a discussion of epilepsy corresponding to the Hippocratic *On the sacred disease*. I thank Ben Acosta-Hughes (pers. comm.) for suggesting this connection to me.

Here Apuleius again uses a reference to Aristotle, not only on a specific point (the existence of animals that live in fire), but also, more generally, to supplement a discussion of the four species of beings found in the Universe, following Plato's *Timaeus* (*Tim.* 39e–40d).²⁷ Furthermore, the personification of *natura*, whom Apuleius imagines as loth to 'permit' (*pateretur*) the realm of the air to remain empty, adheres to his strategy in *De Platone*, presenting a homogenised Platonic world view beyond the specifics.

If we read Apuleius' decision to follow Aristotle and Theophrastus in *De mundo* in light of these passages then, in terms of Apuleius' own Platonic considerations, no disharmony need arise between Plato's Universe and the supplements added by his own followers. Instead, Apuleius adds a further argument in support of recent work emphasising that traditions of ancient Platonism did not always mark stark disjunction between Plato and Aristotle.²⁸

If for Apuleius, Aristotle (and Theophrastus) followed where his master Plato's *Timaeus* left off, we have already seen in the biography of *De Platone* how Apuleius imagines Plato following Socrates in his own philosophical development. Our question, however, must be: what does a return to Socrates achieve within traditions of Platonism? Nietzsche's conception of 'The Problem of Socrates' founded on what he dubs 'the dialectical hero of the Platonic drama', is significantly a problem *with* Platonism.²⁹ There have been numerous attempts

²⁷ On the contradictory passages in Aristotle on the existence of animals in fire, see Trzaskoma (2002) 257–8 n. 13. The theory of demonology that was developed in the early Academy was one of the major supplements to Plato's conception of the universe. In the pseudo-Platonic *Epinomis* (981b–985e), the author changes the number of living beings Plato postulates in the *Timaeus* (39e–41a) from four to five, adding the intermediary *daimones* who were also corporeal.

²⁸ Gerson (2005) and Karamanolis (2006).

²⁹ This is Nietzsche's conception of Socrates in *The Birth of Tragedy*. On Nietzsche and 'The Problem of Socrates', see Kofman (1998), Nehamas (1998) and Porter (2006). The quotation from Nietzsche's notebook entry given by Porter (2006) 414 is a compelling realisation of Socrates as a Platonic construct: 'I believe that the magic of Socrates was this: that he had one soul, and behind that another, and behind that another. Xenophon lay down to sleep in the foremost one, Plato in

to prise Socrates away from the Platonic stage and (of course) to read through the Platonic dialogues and somehow extract the real Socrates.³⁰ These attempts hinge on reading the dialogues as quasi-biography.³¹ In the grand tradition of Platonism, the opposite is the case, for there Socrates is transformed into the mere spokesman or mouthpiece for the voice of his master, Plato. Even in the debate between Academic Scepticism and dogmatism, Socrates is not accorded authority beyond his role of Platonic spokesman.³² And, ultimately, in Neoplatonism he is almost entirely taken out of the equation.³³

Between these extremes of non-Platonic Socrates, appropriated in spite of Plato, and Platonic Socrates, read as the master's mouthpiece, confusion reigns in the Middle Platonic period. We have texts of Platonic doxography that only refer to Socrates in an exemplary way within the Platonic system.³⁴ In other contexts, Socrates becomes synonymous with the figure of the Stoic sage, rather than the model Platonic philosopher, which is accounted for by the Stoic influence in Middle Platonic

the second, and then again in the third, only here Plato went to bed with his own, second soul. Plato is himself somebody with many recesses and foregrounds.'

³⁰ This is especially the case with the Stoics. Long (2004) 11, 'He [Epictetus] was drawn to Plato not out of interest in Plato's speculative philosophy but because the Platonic dialogues were the richest source on Socrates' life, thought, and conversation.' On the Socratic tradition in Stoicism in general, see Schofield (1984), Long (1988), Striker (1994), Brown (2006). For the role of Xenophon's Socrates in the conception of Socratic teaching as being Stoic 'avant les lettres', see Erler (2002). On Apuleius' relationship to Stoicism, see Bitel (2000) 38–57, Trzaskoma (2004).

³¹ Tarrant (2000a) 56–7, on Panaetius' reading of the more biographical dialogues (e.g. *Phaedo*).

³² See Sedley (1997). The case of the non-Academic Sceptics is different. See Bett (2006) for the divergent reactions to Socrates of Pyrrhonists and Academics. For the former there is a tradition that separates Plato's Socrates from the historical Socrates. See, for example, the reference to Timon saying that Plato misrepresented Socrates by making him more than the ἡθολογος he actually was (Sext. Emp. *Adv. Acad.* 7.10).

³³ Calder et al. (2002) xiii, 'of all the important philosophical movements of antiquity, only the Neoplatonists dispensed entirely with Socrates as an authority for proper living and philosophical doctrine'.

³⁴ There is, however, a playful reference in Alcinous' *Didaskalikos* 4.155 to meeting Plato and thinking you are meeting Socrates, as in the founding conceit of Derrida's *Postcard* (Derrida (1987). Here he is very much used as an *exemplum*, as in the discussion of syllogism (6.158) and matter (9.163). For the issue of referencing and the commonplace of the 'Socrates is mortal' *exemplum*, see Bett (2006) 301–2.

‘eclecticism’.³⁵ In addition, Socrates plays a vital part in Cynic revival of the Middle Platonic period.³⁶

Most significantly of all, there is a telling conflation of Socrates with Pythagoras in several Middle Platonists.³⁷ Obviously this conflation operates as a way of projecting Plato’s unified doctrine onto the two main sources, in spite of their distinct influences on that doctrine. But here we meet a version of Socrates that appears to remain true to his inception, not only Plato’s ironist or dialectician, but also his religious radical. It is this Socratic figure that plays such a surprisingly pivotal role in the Platonism of the second century CE, and in the Apuleian corpus in particular, especially in the case of his *daimonion*. Socrates’ very introduction into the lecture *De deo Socratis* is enacted by Apuleius’ refusal to discuss the numerous *exempla* of religious rites that employ daemonic figures. Instead, he finds it better to focus on the singular *exemplum* of Socrates. The reason for this becomes clear at once, as the lecture turns to the issue of *daemones* as embodied souls as well as guiding deities. In this way, the return to Socrates within the discussion of Platonic demonology is not a challenge to the tradition of Platonism, but an exemplary model that helps transition from the role of *daemones* in the Platonic Universe to the ethical cultivation of the internal *daemon* that philosophy demands. As with following Aristotle in *De mundo*, recalling the *exemplum* of Socrates in *De deo Socratis* enables Apuleius to adopt a specific methodological approach to certain topics within Platonism.

Apuleius follows Aristotle (and Theophrastus) in *De mundo* and recalls the *exemplum* of Socrates in *De deo Socratis* to emphasise specific extensions of the Platonic tradition. The former shows that Apuleius’ work on natural philosophy is part of a Platonic continuity, traced back to Plato as the original

³⁵ Dillon and Long (1988).

³⁶ See Brancacci (2000). It is in the Cynic mode that the character of Socrates is introduced in the *Met.*: see Keulen (2003).

³⁷ Specifically Numenius, who makes Socrates a Pythagorean (fr. 24). See Dillon (1988) 120–1.

master, while the latter enacts the movement from natural philosophy (*daemones* in general) to ethics (the *daemon* as soul). Nevertheless, beyond these issues within Platonism, both works incorporate specific topics of Platonic cosmology into their methodological choices.

Let us now look at how Apuleius references Aristotle and Theophrastus at the beginning of *De mundo* (*Mu. pref.* 289):

quare nos Aristotelen prudentissimum et doctissimum philosophorum et Theophrastum auctorem secuti, quantum possumus cogitatione contingere, dicemus de omni hac caelesti ratione, naturasque et officia complexi, et cur et quemadmodum moueantur, explicabimus.

Therefore, having followed Aristotle, the wisest and most learned of philosophers and the authority of Theophrastus, as much as we can grasp with thought, we shall speak about this whole heavenly system and, having embraced its natures and workings, we shall explain why and how they are moved.³⁸

The phrase 'as much as we can grasp with thought' (*quantum possumus cogitatione contingere*) translates a passage in the *Peri kosmou* in which the exegete explicitly refers to possible limitations on mankind by stating 'as far as it is possible, let us theologise about these greatest features of the Universe' (καθ' ὅσον ἐφικτόν, θεολογῶμεν περὶ τούτων συμπάντων, *Peri K.* 391b). Apuleius' Latin makes a parallel between 'following' (*secuti*) the 'authority' (*auctorem*) of his sources and 'embracing' (*complexi*) the 'natures and workings' (*naturasque et officia*) of the Universe. This 'following' reiterates the comparison between the flight enabled by Philosophy and the encounter with the supreme god as Universal Ruler. Therefore, just as with the treatment of the topic of the supreme deity, the choice of Plato's Peripatetic successors, Aristotle and Theophrastus, as Apuleius' guides in *De mundo*, evokes the key image of the flight of Philosophy. This shows how Apuleius conflates his methodological strategy with the figures of authority he employs, correlative with the topic of his treatise.

³⁸ For a comparison with the *Peri kosmou*, see Hijmans (1987) 428–9 remarking that the phrasing implies that the thought follows Aristotle, the expression, Theophrastus.

In *De deo Socratis*, the *exemplum* of Socrates introduces the section that conflates the figure of the *daemon* as soul with the image of the oath of allegiance to philosophy (*Soc.* 21.167):

quin potius non quoque Socratis exemplo et commemoratione erigimur ac nos secundo studio philosophiae paris similium numinum cupientes³⁹ permittimus?

Why are we not also encouraged by the example and remembrance of Socrates and why don't we entrust ourselves to the beneficial study of the same sort of philosophy, longing after similar divinities?

Here Apuleius parallels the *exemplum* and *commemoratio* of Socrates with the related gestures of pursuing philosophy and permitting the aid of the protective forces of the *daemones* for his audience. The failure of us humans to be 'encouraged' (*erigimur*) by Socrates is, he continues, explained by us being 'disparaged' (*detrahimur*) by the fact that 'men do not cultivate their own soul' (*animum suum non colant*). This then leads to the parallel cultivation of one's own *daemon* as itself a cultivation that is in turn an oath of allegiance to philosophy. In short, the pivotal significance of Socrates for *De deo Socratis*, as is the case with Aristotle and Theophrastus in *De mundo*, cannot be separated from the Platonic topic, or from Apuleius' particular methodological approaches in each work and their own idiosyncratic images of the impersonation of philosophy.

Translation, reading and interpretation

Even if the roles of Aristotle and Socrates in *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis* can be folded into the individual methodological aims of each work, how can this emphasis on methodology intervene in the thorny issue of translation for both works? With *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis* the issue of originality arises at once. While *De Platone* has also been understood in terms of a reworking of Greek models, these works are, in their different ways, always understood through their translation, adaptation or expansion of Greek works. *De mundo* is a

³⁹ Here I diverge from the text of Moreschini (1991), as I find no precedent for *caueo* + gen. while *cupio* + gen. is more common.

translation of a Greek work – *Peri kosmou* – imagined to have been written by Aristotle to Alexander the Great.⁴⁰ As for *De deo Socratis*, the ostensible topic of the lecture – Socrates' *daimonion* – has traditionally been understood in terms of other earlier and contemporary treatments of the topic in Greek.⁴¹ Furthermore, the delayed treatment of the ostensible theme of Socrates' *daimonion* in the middle of our text has provoked a reading that understands the extant Latin text of the lecture as following from a now missing Greek section which announced the topic of the title more specifically.⁴² But, as with the other debates we have already addressed – doctrinal readings and the expansion of Platonism – we can understand these questions of translation in terms of the methodological choices of each work.

The opening of *De mundo* juxtaposes philosophy's dual role in the 'interpretation of nature' (*naturae interpretationem*) and the 'investigation of things remote from sight' (*remotarum ab oculis inuestigationem*). Interpretation and investigation are thus seen as distinct enterprises for Philosophy, and both will be the focus of the treatise in different, though related, forms. On the one hand, humans can interpret nature as they 'look at' (*inspicerent*) the earthly regions, while with Philosophy as their guide they can investigate the Universe by 'daring to travel with their soul' (*animo peregrinari ausi sunt*) and 'see with their thoughts' (*cogitationibus uiderant*). After this flight, Apuleius returns to earth by describing how his project differs from the approach of typically mundane writings (*Mu. pref.* 288–9):

quare et eos qui unius loci ingenia nobis qualitatesque describunt, aut moenia urbis aut alicuius amnis fluentia aut amoenitates et magnitudines montium, alia multa descripta ab aliis, plerique studiose legunt: Nysae iuga et penetralia Corcyi et Olympi sacra et Ossae ardua, alia huiusmodi sola dumtaxat et singula extollunt. quorum me miseret, cum tanto opere nec magnis et oppido paucis inexplabili admiratione capiuntur. hoc illis euenire

⁴⁰ For the heterodox theory that the Alexander addressed is in fact the Neronian pros-ecutor and prefect of Egypt, Ti. Claudius Alexander, see the summary discussion in Reale and Bos (1995) 12.

⁴¹ Plutarch's dialogue *On the Daimonion of Socrates* and Maximus of Tyre's *Orations* 8 and 9.

⁴² See Harrison (2000) 141–4.

Universal reading and daemonic interpretation

adeo non est mirabile, cum nihil maius suspexerint neque ad aliquid intenderint, quod maiore diligentia contemplandum esset. ceterum si terrarum orbem omnemque mundum contemplari pariter aliquando potuissent, minus exiguas eius et singulas partes dignas laudibus credidissent, quibus esset universitas comprehensa.

Therefore, most people eagerly read those who describe to us the characteristics and qualities of a particular place, either the walls of a city or the courses of a particular river or the beauties or expanses of some mountains, and many other things described by others: they praise the ridges of Nysa, the caves of Corcyus, and the sacred sites of Olympus and the cliffs of Ossa, as well as other things of this kind only individually and one by one. I pity these people, when they are so captivated by an insatiable admiration for things that are neither large nor of any great importance. It is no wonder that this happens to them, when they have admired nothing greater, nor have strained for anything that needs to be contemplated with extra attentiveness. But if they had finally been able to contemplate the earth and the entire Universe equally, they would have believed that its small and individual parts are less worthy of praise, once they had understood that which is the Whole.

Apuleius parallels the limits of early vision without philosophy's guidance to the blinkered written accounts of specific earthly phenomena. The lack of ambition in these works in treating individual places is expressed in how they have never 'admired' (*suspexerint*, lit. 'looked up to') nor 'strained for' (*intenderint*) greater and loftier matters. This focus on the limited ambitions of these writers replaces the language used in *Peri kosmou* (391) of these 'small-minded' (μικροψυχίας) and 'blind' (ἄθεῆστοι) writers. This correction of the Greek model makes Apuleius' comparison with his own project in its 'reading' of the Universe in its totality and the flight of the philosopher more explicit. Apuleius intimates that the Universe is a book to be read in its totality, and this 'universal reading' works by aligning the role of the exegete with that of the Universal Ruler.⁴³

This approach to universal reading can further be understood in terms of Apuleius' decision to translate and adapt wholesale the text of *Peri kosmou*. The *De mundo* exegete's fantasy catascopia can be seen as an accumulation of the views and

⁴³ For a survey of this metaphor of the book of the universe, see Derrida (1978) 15–18.

writings of others to come up with the complete picture. Colated from variations on the Greek original and appropriate use of quotation and citation, Apuleius' Platonic Universe is a construct and far less of a totality than his fantasy demands. Yet this too balances the exegetical mode with the elements of the Universe, through the dynamic tension between transcendence and immanence. One way in which Apuleius adapts his Greek source is through an incorporation of the Platonic hierarchy of beings into the master plan of the Universal Ruler. Apuleius describes him as ineffable in his *maiestas*, participating in the Universe through his employment of other *potestates*, 'those powers that god distributes through all parts of the universe and world' (*eas autem potestates per omnes partes mundi orbisque dispendat*, *Mu.* 27.350).⁴⁴ Earlier Apuleius referred to 'all those who have been born or made for the completion of the universe' (*omnium, qui ad complendum mundum nati factique sunt*, *Mu.* 24.343) and told how the *rector mundi* 'brings stability through itself and through others' (*per se et per alios opem salutis adferre*, *Mu.* 25.344). This idea of completion and help through others resides in a hierarchy of principles that follows out the functions of the supreme god.⁴⁵ These intermediary powers are absent from *Peri kosmou*, but in spite of the insertion of demonology into *De mundo*, the exegetical mode is still very much 'top-down'. Thus, the tension within the Universe, between a transcendent god and the powers deployed to support him, parallels the exegetical mode of the work.

Apuleius' strategy of *De mundo* in supplementing his Greek model hints at the direction of *De deo Socratis*, not just the insertion into the Greek model of the topic of mediating *daemones*, but also its focus on translation as a suitable methodology. In fact, it is Apuleius' emphasis on the daemonic in *De deo Socratis* through the singular *exemplum* of Socrates that enables the ethical to enter into the cosmic system of Plato's thought. In short, the protreptic force of the transition from the

⁴⁴ For a general discussion of how the plural *potestates* replace the singular 'power' (δύναμις) of the god in *Peri K.*, see Gersh (1986) 277 and Harrison (2000) 176, both following Regen (1971) 33–83.

⁴⁵ Gersh (1986) 273–9.

description of the Universe to the agency of the *rector mundi* in *De mundo* is set to parallel the move from discussion of *daemones* in the Universe to the *exemplum* of Socrates in *De deo Socratis*.

De deo Socratis is a pivotal work in the Apuleian corpus and in our appreciation of his Platonism. Classed as both a philosophical and rhetorical work, it bridges the artificial division imposed on the corpus.⁴⁶ *De deo Socratis* is a popular philosophical lecture on the theme of Platonic demonology and the *daimonion* of Socrates. As a lecture it differs considerably from the treatise *De mundo*. That said, its Latinising focus is akin to that work. In terms of its theme, it has close parallels with two *Dialexeis* of Maximus of Tyre and a stunning dialogue from Plutarch. Most of the attention given to Apuleius' lecture has concentrated on comparing it with these works. But when we move the debate away from doctrinal similarities and on to generic affiliation we expose closer affinities between Apuleius and Maximus but correspondingly increased distance from Plutarch. Sandy disparagingly compares Apuleius and Maximus in their 'blending of second-hand erudition with popular presentation'.⁴⁷ The challenge lies in showing how the popularisation of – or, better, the making accessible of – complex ideas is much more than 'second-hand erudition'. A related issue is the dubbing of both authors as 'sophists'. The effect of the sophist mantle on figures like Apuleius and Maximus is to underestimate their employment of rhetorical genres for philosophical means. For our purposes it is more important to ask: how do Apuleius and Maximus treat their Platonism in these lectures? While in Apuleius we only have one extant work of Platonic lecturing, in Maximus we have several.⁴⁸ These works range from methodological to direct exposition of Platonic

⁴⁶ This is best exemplified by its presence in Harrison, Hilton, Hunink (2001) – a translation of the 'rhetorical works' and Moreschini (1991) an edition of the 'philosophical works'.

⁴⁷ Sandy (1997) 94.

⁴⁸ Diseases of mind and body (*Or.* 7), demonology (*Or.* 8 and 9), learning and recollection (*Or.* 10), Plato on God (*Or.* 11), prophecy and human foresight (*Or.* 13), Plato and Homer (*Or.* 17), the true end of life (*Or.* 29–33), God and the sources of evil (*Or.* 41).

theories.⁴⁹ The most important work of Maximus for studies of Platonism, though symptomatically ignored by philologists, is his eleventh oration on Plato's concept of god.⁵⁰ This material is related to Alcinous' *Didaskalikos* and Numenius' *On the Good* as well as to Apuleius' *De Platone*. Yet the specific focus of a comparison must be based on Maximus' treatments of the topic of Socrates' *daimonion* and *daimones* in general. Maximus of Tyre's *Orations* 8 and 9 (with the shared title '*What is the daimonion of Socrates?*') are philosophical orations delivered in Rome. Even if neither the direct influence of either work on *De deo Socratis* can be proved, nor the priority of Maximus or Apuleius established, it is in any case clear that the topic was popular in the period.⁵¹ Indeed, this could explain why these texts deal with the subject matter in such drastically different ways. There are very few direct connections between Apuleius' and Plutarch's treatment of the topic,⁵² whereas, because of their shared generic assignment to the 'philosophical oration', the relationship between Apuleius' and Maximus' treatments has been read as much closer. But there are still significant differences of approach to each author's take on the subject, so simply reading Apuleius as adapting standard subject matter does scant justice to *De deo Socratis*. Rather, suitably interpreted, these differences will tell us a great deal about the respective philosophical methodologies and ambitions.

⁴⁹ *Or.* 11 is important for both, e.g. methodology: 'When even Plato, unsurpassed in eloquence (even in comparison to Homer), is still unable to carry conviction with his account of God, and people desire to instead learn of his opinions from some other source, then only a fool would be ready to hazard an account' (*Or.* 11.1); and direct exposition of Platonic theories, as when Maximus gives Plato's answer to the question of Zeus' ineffability: '[Plato's] answer goes like this. He proceeds to describe the distinction between the intelligible and the perceptible' (*Or.* 11.7).

⁵⁰ Dillon (1977) 399 mentions *Or.* 11 first in his list of Maximus' works important for Platonism. See also Runia (1986) 230.

⁵¹ Trapp (1997) 67–8 and Harrison (2000) 137. Hunink (2004b) on the relationship between Plutarch and Apuleius finds no telling signs that Apuleius is responding to Plutarch's treatment of the subject. There are significant correspondences, however, between Plutarch's account of demonology elsewhere in his corpus. On demonology in general, see Smith (1978), Brenk (1986), Pérez Jiménez and Cruz Andreotti (2002).

⁵² Elsom (1984) 93, 'Plutarch's *De Genio Socratis*, actually has very little in common with it [*Soc.*], although it shows that Socrates' sign was a subject for literary treatment and speculation'. See Riley (1977) and Hardie (1996) for discussion of Plutarch's work.

Three specific differences form the basis of discussion. First, Apuleius is unique in grounding his account in an acknowledged Platonic demonological theory, which he explicitly states is Plato's account as transmitted via himself as intermediary. Both Plutarch and Maximus are well aware of the Platonic context for discussion of both the *daimonion* and *daimones* in general; yet both choose to refrain from either citation of or direct engagement with Plato. On Plutarch's part, this constitutes an ambitiously subtle approach to the topic that vies with Platonic dialogue itself in its dramatic ingenuity and thus proclaims his evident Platonic affiliations through literary emulation. As for Maximus, this betrays his general concern for Hellenic *paideia* and Plato's role within Second Sophistic cultural concerns, and not with an acknowledged Platonism as such.⁵³ As for Apuleius, the overt Platonism of *De deo Socratis* must be read in relation to the biographical exegesis of *De Platone* and his self-defence as *Platonicus philosophus* in the *Apologia*.

The second major difference is that Apuleius alone of the three moves from the general issue of (Platonic) demonology to the specific case of Socrates' *daimonion*, whereas Plutarch and Maximus consider the specific case of Socrates' *daimonion* before discussion of *daimones* in general. In Plutarch, a dramatically interwoven historical sub-plot and shifting modes of narration allow direct connection between the two to be intimated without explicit argument. Maximus, on the other hand, is direct and explicit in the reasoning behind his moving from the one to the other. In Apuleius' case, his ordering has confused readers, but, as we shall see, the ordering in all three accounts follows from the first difference – from the role of Plato in constructing each work.

The third difference is that Apuleius' text concludes in impassioned protreptic discourse, absent from the other treatments. Maximus' text has some significant moments in which the account of *daimones* turns into a debate over virtue and vice, while Plutarch has been read as debating the differences

⁵³ Trapp (1997) xxvii.

between the theoretical and practical life. By contrast, Apuleius not only ends on a forceful protreptic note, but presents significant moments of protreptic throughout the speech.

The explicit role for Plato, the structure of the lecture and the concluding protreptic that differentiate Apuleius' lecture from Plutarch's dialogue and Maximus' oration all point to essential features of Apuleius' Platonism already outlined. The explicit role for Plato follows the biographical exegesis of *De Platone*, while the ordering of topics and protreptic conclusion exemplify the variations on this mode in the introduction of other voices and the authorial voice of the exegete in particular, as seen in *De mundo*. In fact, Apuleius presents these divergences from his Greek Platonist predecessor and contemporary explicitly in terms of his role as an 'interpreter' (*interpres*). He imagines himself as 'translating' Plato's heavenly 'verdict' (*sententia*) in a comparable way to the *daemones*' mediation between gods and men. Moreover, the transition to the exemplary figure of Socrates and the protreptic conclusion show a further persuasive strategy in which the exegete engages with his audience and proves the ethical force of Platonic demonology. As we shall see in the next chapter, what informs both the Platonising defence-speech (*Apologia*) and the philosophising orations collected in the *Florida* is the bringing of philosophy down from the heavens.

The flight of Philosophy: reading *De mundo*

De mundo has enjoyed a slightly more sympathetic reception in Apuleian scholarship than the consistently undervalued *De Platone*. Its comparatively richer literary texture has been the main focus of its reappraisal.⁵⁴ In addition, its status as a translation has not only meant that it has been compared to the *Metamorphoses* with its Greek model (the pseudo-Lucianic *Onos*), but also that its methods of updating the Greek *Peri kosmou* for a Roman audience have received considerable

⁵⁴ Bajoni (1994) and Harrison (2000).

attention.⁵⁵ Within this generally engaged and positive evaluation of the text in terms of literary texture and as a translation, there is a seemingly simplistic observation about the work that hints at a key feature of its exegetical methodology. The opening description of the Universe has been described in terms reminiscent of *De Platone*, as ‘textbook style’.⁵⁶ Yet, by the time the topic of the Universal Ruler (*rector mundi*) is reached (*Mu.* 24.341), Apuleius’ style has adapted to the personalised governance of the Universe and he is even seen as ‘visibly more freely enjoying his material’.⁵⁷ This upbeat verdict on the division of the text between standard textbook description of the Universe and a more lively, personalised account of the Universal Ruler, is an important, if vague, observation. In what follows, I shall explore in detail the rhetorical moulding of the character of the exegete that enables this transformation from textbook description of the Universe to engaging portrait of the Universal Ruler, beginning from an early hint at this division in the very opening of the work. Let us take our cue from the first section of the preface to *De mundo* (*Mu.* pref. 285–8):

consideranti mihi et diligentius intuenti et saepe alias, Faustine fili, uirtutis indagatrix expultrixque uitiorum, diuinarum particeps rerum philosophia uidebatur et nunc maxime, cum naturae interpretationem et remotarum ab oculis rerum inuestigationem sibi uindicet. nam cum ceteri magnitudine rei terri, eiusmodi laborem arduum et profundum existimarent, sola philosophia suum non despexit ingenium, nec indignam se existimauit, cui diuinarum et humanarum rerum disceptatio deferatur, sed conducere ac decere⁵⁸ tam bonas artes et eiusmodi operam cum ingenuitate professionis suae credidit et congruere istiusmodi curam talibus studiis et moribus. nam cum mundum homines eiusque penetralia corpore adire non possent, ut tereno domicilio illas regiones inspicerent, philosophiam ducem nanti eiusque inuentis imbuti, animo peregrinari ausi sunt per caeli plagas, his itineribus quae exploratione acuminis sui peruia sapientiae solis cogitationibus uiderant, ut, cum ipsius interualli condicione a mundi uicinia natura nos secretos esse uoluisset, immensitati tamen eius uolucrique curriculo cogitationum nostrarum nos pernicitas intimaret; facillimeque ea, de quibus origo eius est,

⁵⁵ The foundational study comparing *Peri kosmou* and *Mu.* is Müller (1939). For the Romanising focus of *Peri K.*, see Harrison (2000) 193–5 and Thomas (2007) 55.

⁵⁶ Sandy (1997) 225. ⁵⁷ Sandy (1997) 226–7.

⁵⁸ On the reading *decere*, see Novak (1911) 125.

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anima diuinis suis oculis aspexit, agnouit, aliis etiam eius scientiam tradidit, ueluti prophetae quidam deorum maiestate completi effantur ceteris quae diuino beneficio soli uident.

When I contemplate and examine the issue attentively, Faustinus my son, Philosophy has often on other occasions revealed herself to be the tracker of virtue, the expeller of vices, and a participant in divine matters, but it seems all the more so now, when she asserts her claim to the interpretation of nature and the investigation of matters far removed from our eyes. For although others have been intimidated by the sheer magnitude of the matter at hand and judged such a task arduous and endless, Philosophy alone did not look down on her own innate talent and think herself unworthy of the charge to examine human and divine matters. Instead, she believed that such noble arts and that sort of effort chime with and befit the nobility of her profession and that a duty of care of that kind tallies with such studies and character. And since men were unable to physically tour the Universe and its depths, they took on Philosophy as their guide in order to inspect those regions from their earthly home and, imbued with her discoveries, they dared to mind-travel through the regions of the sky. These missions, which thanks to their shrewd investigations they had realized merely by contemplation, gave passage to wisdom. So that, although nature wished us to be separated from the vicinity of the Universe through the stipulation of distance itself, nevertheless the speed of our thoughts gets across to us its vastness and flying course. The soul easily saw and recognised with her own divine eyes those principles from which it originated, and also handed down her knowledge to others, just as certain prophets filled with the majesty of the gods tell others the things which they alone see through divine benevolence.

The main scholarly focus on this preface has been to establish the Ciceronian cast of the *incipit* and to identify the various ‘allusions’ to Lucretius, Manilius and Seneca.⁵⁹ These ‘Romanising’ literary features of the text are essential to how Apuleius transforms the Greek original. Nonetheless, this attention has detracted somewhat from exploring exactly what Apuleius, and his source, the author of *Peri kosmou*, are aiming at by opening their treatise this way. The personification of Philosophy and the soul (*anima*) in this passage deserves particular comment, especially given the role of the conceptual personification of Reason (*ratio*) in *De Platone*.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Bajoni (1994) 1795–7; Harrison (2000) 184–5; Bajoni (2004).

⁶⁰ For an extended discussion of personification in Latin Literature, see Courcelle (1970). He links Philosophy in *Mu.* to Prudence in *Soc.*, but misses Reason in *Pl.*

The preface develops the personification *gradatim*. First Apuleius addresses his son Faustinus, to recall his own past investigation into Philosophy and to expound Philosophy's own investigative processes. The address, which parallels the opening of the second book of *De Platone*, immediately acts as an explicit protreptic.⁶¹ In effect, Apuleius calls on his son to follow his own investigation into the workings of Philosophy. But at the same time, the way in which Philosophy is described parallels these processes of investigation as a feature of her own work. This is Apuleius' impersonation of Philosophy in a nutshell. Do as Philosophy herself does!

We are then told that Philosophy is able to investigate 'things far removed from our eyes' (*remotarum ab oculis rerum*), and, unlike other disciplines, Philosophy, metaphorically, did not 'look down on' (*despexit* i.e. 'disparage') her own 'innate ability' (*ingenium*). The theme of sight – literal and metaphorical – continues as we move to humankind and how for them to 'look' (*inspicerent*) at the heavenly regions from earth they need Philosophy as guide. Only then can they 'see' (*uiderant*) with their thoughts and finally, their immortal soul (*anima*) can look, understand and relate this wisdom, just as prophets can speak of what they have seen. As with the introductory parallel between Apuleius' lesson to his son to mirror Philosophy's investigative attitude by investigating philosophy, the focus on sight makes a parallel between the limits of human sight and the sight of the soul in terms of the latter being that of Philosophy herself.

These two opening roles of the personification of Philosophy prepare Faustinus for the adventure to come and in particular for several key ideas. First is the correlation between the process of reading the text of *De mundo* with the processes of access to wisdom, enabled by Philosophy. Second is the dynamic between human access to earthly phenomena and the need for Philosophy to understand the whole Universe, beyond the terrestrial realm. Third, how the soul, through the analogy

⁶¹ On the later tradition of the *Met.* also being addressed to Faustinus, see Gaisser (2008) 291–2.

with prophecy, intimates that the issue of access to the gods will play a major role. As we shall see, all these ideas operate in the treatise and are at times interconnected. For example, the remainder of the preface repeats the dynamic between the terrestrial view of humankind and the Philosophy-inspired ‘view through thought’ in terms of the first, exegetical scheme. Previous writers have described the earth, but this study, with the help of Philosophy and following Aristotle and Theophrastus, can show the whole Universe.

Furthermore, as will become increasingly clear, the issue of investigating the Universe is not only a matter of how (i.e. with human eyes or with the mind), but also ‘from where’, as the explicit description of location supports the focus on seeing. We are told where humans ‘cannot go’ (*adire non possent*), limiting them to look from their ‘earthly home’ (*terreno domicilio*); but with Philosophy as guide (*philosophiam ducem*) they can ‘dare to mind-travel’ (*animo peregrinari ausi sunt*), along the ‘routes passable for wisdom’ (*peruia sapientiae*) and can lessen the cosmic distances put in place by nature. This focus on location emphasises the change from humankind seeing (the earth) to the flight of Philosophy enabling a ‘down-looking’ (or catascopic) perspective. This change of perspective enacts an important transition played out in the exegesis that follows. While the exegetical mode of the passages of *De mundo* that depict terrestrial phenomena is filled with ‘lecture-hall’ style gestures (e.g. ‘we have said enough about the oceans’ or ‘let us move on to the topic of the clouds’), at moments when the issue of direct human access to cosmic phenomena becomes limited and requires the imagined catascopic perspective enabled by Philosophy’s flight and that ‘seeing in thought’, the exegesis changes perspective as well. The ultimate change in perspective is in the build-up to and general discussion of the Universal Ruler (*rector mundi*). A discourse on cosmic harmony, followed by praise of the Universe, transforms the exegesis from ‘lecture-hall’ style to a more rhetorically loaded mode, at the same time that the topic under discussion requires a catascopic perspective instead of the earlier terrestrial view. This change in exegetical tooling operates throughout the Universal Ruler

vignette, to reach its crescendo with the translation of a passage of Plato's *Laws* that explicitly recalls the image of Philosophy in the preface. In what follows, we shall first explore the nuances of the 'mundane description' of the first part of the work and then consider the 'universal reading' of the second part. As we shall see, however, there are fleeting signs in this first 'mundane' section of the catasopic, 'universal reading' to come.

Mundane description

The majority of *De mundo* comprises a detailed description of the Universe (*mundus*).⁶² Starting from a general description of its nature, Apuleius moves on to the division between its regions of *aether* and *aer*, then dividing the latter into sea and land, which are each given extended accounts, including the various phenomena of winds and earthquakes.

Within this descriptive account of the Universe, I shall highlight two features of interest. First, how Apuleius adds nuance to his model in the way he describes topics and also makes transitions between topics, culminating in the extended insertion of a passage of another text (Favorinus, *On the Winds*) when making transitions. Second, how Apuleius tailors his descriptive method to the topic under consideration, especially in terms of the perspective of relative accessibility of particular phenomena (e.g. the rainbow). Both of these methodological variations can be gleaned by inspecting Apuleius' choice of descriptive method.

Consider the variety of descriptive approaches in the opening overview of the Universe as a whole, as Apuleius adds nuance to his description as well as emphasising a particular perspective (*Mu.* 1.289–90):

mundus omnis societate caeli et terrae constat et eorum natura, quae utriusque sunt; uel sic: mundus est ornata ordinatio dei munere, deorum recta custodia. cuius cardinem – sic enim dixerim κέντρον – robustum et immobilem genetrix atque altrix animantium omnium habet tellus, supernis omnibus, ut uideri potest, aeris liquiditate ad modum tegminis saeptis et

⁶² For a convenient summary, see Harrison (2000) 181–3.

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opertis. ultra deorum domus est, quod caelum uocamus: quod quidem diuinis corporibus onustum uidemus, pulcherrimis ignibus et perlucidis solis et lunae reliquorumque siderum, cum quibus fertur per orbem dierum noctiumque curriculis, agens et stellarum choros intermino lapsu, finem nulla aevi defectione factura.

The Universe in its totality consists of the union of sky and earth and the nature of what belongs to both; or put it this way: the Universe is an ordered arrangement prepared for by the favour of god and the upright vigilance of the gods. The central point of the Universe – for this is what I shall call the *kentron* – is held fixed and immovable by that which is the creator and nurse of all living beings, the land, which at its heights, as far as it is possible for them to be seen, is surrounded and concealed by the limpidity of the air, in the manner of a covering. Beyond is the home of the gods, which we call heaven and which we see loaded with divine bodies, by the most beautiful and bright fires of the sun, moon and the other stars, with which it moves in its orbit through the circuits of days and nights, leading also the choruses of stars in an endless dance, a dance which will never outlast the exhaustion of time.

In this passage, the bold statement of what the Universe ‘consists’ (*constat*) of (sky and earth) and the ‘nature’ (*natura*) of what belongs to each of them, is immediately followed by further glosses on the idea of their ‘totality’ (*societas*). By describing the universe as both ‘ordered’ (*ordinatio*) and ‘arranged’ (*ornata*) by divine benevolence, while paralleled in the Greek work, Apuleius is highlighting a basic difference between Latin *mundus* and Greek *kosmos*. Unlike Greek *kosmos*, *mundus* carries no connotation of order and ornamentation, so Apuleius’ Latin must supplement them. This glossing of the orderly *mundus* is then followed by what at first seems a confusing reversal of these two realms of *aer* (earthly atmosphere) and *aether* (heavenly atmosphere). While the phrase ‘as far as it is possible for them to be seen’ (*ut uideri potest*) hints at the limitations of human access in the realm of *aer*, the authorial exegete states that ‘we see’ (*uidemus*) the planets and stars of the *aether*. These two phrases of ‘seeing’ do not appear in the Greek text and have the effect of marking our limited view of the accessible realm of the *aer*, but at the same time the bodies in the heavenly *aether*, even though they are ultimately inaccessible to us, can be seen, and, moreover, can be brought into more immediate

proximity by the very discussion of them. It is this methodological accessibility that bridges the two topics of the necessary glossing of the translation of *kosmos* as *mundus* and the regions of *aer* and *aether*.

Such a method is, furthermore, grounded in the investigative role of personified Philosophy in the preface and is one of the main ways in which this descriptive method differs from the biographical exegesis of *De Platone*, sharing with Alcinous in the *Didaskalikos* the lecture-hall style of presentation. This approach, a more mundane version of the authorial protreptic method, consists in making asides on previously discussed material and functional transitions from one topic to another. Now this could seem straightforward enough and adequately explained by the address to Faustinus prefacing the work, rather than the biography of Plato. But the presence of an addressee does not explain why, some (although by no means all) of the various asides are there in the Greek of *Peri kosmou*, the more plodding transitions are not.⁶³ While Apuleius mirrors the main transitions of *Peri kosmou*, after the preface and when introducing the topic of the Universal Ruler, he adds many more that are not in the Greek, especially in the latter stages of the account of the terrestrial realm. The author of the Greek treatise limits himself to just one moment of major transition, after the account of the oceans and before the topic of exhalations (damp, such as rain, and dry, such as wind) (*Peri K.* 394a):

γῆς μὲν δὴ καὶ θαλάττης φύσιν καὶ θέσιν, ἥντινα καλεῖν εἰώθαμεν οἰκουμένην, τοιάνδε τινὰ ἱστορήκαμεν. περὶ δὲ τῶν ἀξιολογωτάτων ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ περὶ αὐτὴν παθῶν νῦν λέγωμεν, αὐτὰ τὰ ἀναγκαῖα κεφαλαιούμενοι.

About the land and the sea, their nature and setting, which we are accustomed to call the inhabited region, we have now recorded some account. Now let us speak about the most remarkable phenomena in and about that region, summing up only the most necessary points.

⁶³ E.g. ‘they are larger than those already mentioned’ (*Peri K.* 393b) = *iis quas supra diximus esse maiores*, *Mu.* 7.302; ‘this inhabited world, which as we have said is itself an island’ (*Peri K.* 393b) = *hanc nostram insulam, id est hunc terrarum orbem, quam maximam diximus*, *Mu.* 7.303). Not there: ‘from those above, which we called dry’ = *de illa superiore, quam diximus siccam*, *Mu.* 8.306.

In Apuleius' text, this transition is made much more abruptly (*Mu.* 7.305–8.305):

de mari satis dictum. terreni uero casus ita se habent.

Enough has been said about the sea. Terrestrial phenomena occur in the following way.

In what follows, transitions continue in Apuleius' narrative, but not all of them are in *Peri kosmou*. There is an especially odd one when Apuleius reaches the discussion of the naming of the winds. This is how the transition to and away from the topic is done: 'now we shall pursue the names and regions of the winds' (*nunc nomina exsequemur regionesque uentorum*, *Mu.* 11.312); 'now I shall speak on the phantasmagoria of clouds', *nunc de nubium praestigiis referam*, *Mu.* 15.321), where neither transition is present in the respective passages of *Peri kosmou* (394b; 395a). Why does Apuleius feel the need to supplement his narrative with these plodding transitions? One reason presents itself when we consider what happens amid the discussion of the winds. This is the one passage of *De mundo* where Apuleius completely departs from *Peri kosmou* and inserts an account of the winds delivered by Favorinus.⁶⁴ While Apuleius' incorporation of Favorinus' *De uentis* has been discussed at length by scholars, it has not been understood in terms of exegetical methodology.⁶⁵ Apuleius' account of the winds before the Favorinus passage follows that of *Peri kosmou* pretty closely, only adding asides on translation of terms.⁶⁶ The Favorinus intervention, however, is not just filled with Greek terms and translations, but brims with quotations (from Homer, Virgil and Aristotle) and citations (a reference to Cato). What is intriguing about this is that the Favorinus interlude seems to pave the way for this kind of approach in the second half of the work, during the discussion of the Universal Ruler. The effect

⁶⁴ On Apuleius and Favorinus, see Sandy (1997) 93–4 and Holford-Strevens (2003) 98–130. On Favorinus as a comic figure in Gellius, see Keulen (2009a) 97–113.

⁶⁵ On the Favorinus wind passage in Gellius and Apuleius, see Harrison (2000) 186–7.

⁶⁶ E.g. *Mu.* 11.313–14: *zephyrus uero, quem Romana lingua fauonium nouit* ('The West Wind, meanwhile, which the Roman language knew as Favonius'); *Mu.* 12.317: *anaphysemata Graeci uocant eos spiritus* ('The Greeks call vortices those blows').

on the reader, once the passage is over and we encounter the next transition, is one of ‘what just happened there?’ Favorinus, introduced as a ‘not undistinguished Sage’ (*non ignobilis sapiens*, *Mu.* 13.318) bursts into the dry exposition and gives the reader a taste of what is to come, except that there it will be the exegete himself who utilises Favorinus’ methods. Furthermore, another impact of the Favorinus passage is to startle the reader into paying closer attention to the *way* in which the Universe is being described. It is as if a reader – e.g. Faustinus – has been dutifully nodding through the detailed account of earthly phenomena and at this juncture in the treatise, the promised flight of Philosophy feels very distant. So Favorinus’ cameo not only paves the way for the lively exegesis to come, but also recalls the flight of Philosophy in the preface. All of that ‘Ciceronian colour’ and complex network of literary allusions floods back to mind, even when the topic under discussion has not changed. It is moments like this where Apuleius seems to say that teaching philosophy is as much an attitude toward writing as it is toward what you are writing about.

Beyond the Favorinus interlude, the description of the *mundus*, before the praise of the Universe and portrait of its Ruler, does have passing moments of interest from an exegetical perspective, as the descriptive nature of the bulk of the treatise never forgets the opening focus on the pivotal role of Philosophy in the human access to the divine. The majority of the description of the Universe is focused on the realms of human access or the ‘atmosphere’ (*aer*), comprising the sea and earth, and their phenomena (*Mu.* 3.294–16.325). As Harrison acknowledges, ‘various natural phenomena connected with the earth are treated in particular detail, no doubt because they are particularly open to human observation’.⁶⁷ Yet Apuleius’ narrative becomes most compelling at moments when the description of the Universe stretches the limits of human access: at the transition from ‘ether/upper sky’ (*aether*) to ‘air/atmosphere’ (*aer*) and the concluding section of the *aer* on the rainbow that bridges *aer* and *aether*.

⁶⁷ Harrison (2000) 183.

Consider how Apuleius enables the transition from the realm of aether (*aether*) to air (*aer*) by reflecting on the different regions in terms of the visible phenomena available to humankind. First, in his discussion of the aether, he relates the nature of stars in terms of their differences from wandering planets (*Mu.* 2.292):

stellae, quae propter naturam eiusmodi nullis creduntur erroribus uagae, et infinitos numero greges ducunt et simplex aetheris dorsum alma et sacrata amoenitate lucis coronant.

The stars, which given they have this sort of nature are certainly not considered wanderers, lead countless herds of their number and crown the simple backdrop of the aether with the nurturing and sacred loveliness of their light.

Apuleius' emphasis on the fixed nature of the stars is playfully made by an overloading of negated or finessed terms that denote movement (*error*, *uago*, *duco*). Furthermore, in expanding on the original Greek, Apuleius uses a Platonic phrase (*aetheris dorsum*), to show how the stars adorn the simple 'backdrop to the aether', unlike the wandering planets.⁶⁸ In Apuleius' transition to the realm of the air he emphasises the borderline between this region and aether by referring to the visibility of comets (*Mu.* 3.294):

post eam uero partem, quae sancti aetheris finibus coercetur, cuius mensa pensaue distinctio est et natura immutabilis, regio est mortalis ac iam paene terrena, cuius primae sunt partes tenuiores et uaporatae, quippe cum finitimis aetheris attingantur ardoribus, quantum maximis parua et quantum rapidis possunt pigriora contingi. sed ex ea parte, quae curriculis finitimi inuritur solis, se iaculari atque emicare et scintillare flammae quaedam ostensae oculis nostris uidentur, quas Graeci cometas et *docidas* et *bothynos* appellant quasque labi et fluere frequenter uidemus, lucere facile faciliusque restingui.

After this part, remaining within the limits of sacred aether, whose boundaries are defined in size and weight and whose nature is unchanging, there is the mortal and almost earthly region, the first parts of which are lighter and warm, naturally since they are touched by the nearby hot spots of aether, to the extent that small things can be affected by large things and slow things by quick things. But out of the part which is scorched by the paths of the neighbouring sun there seem to shoot out, flash and spark certain flames that are

⁶⁸ Beaujeu (1973) 312; Bajoni (1994) 1799 notes that *aetheris dorsum* translates *Phaedr*us 247b8, a passage Apuleius also uses at *Apol.* 64.4.

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visible to our eyes. The Greeks call these comets or 'beams' or 'burn-holes', and we frequently see them slip and slide, readily lighting up and more readily going out.

The relation of stars in the aether and comets in the air is explicitly demonstrated by an emphasis on the human perception of the latter compared with the inaccessibility of the former. A comparable moment to the description of comets comes when Apuleius introduces the phenomenon of rainbows (*Mu.* 16.323):

atque, ut breuiter comprehendam cuncta generis eiusdem, eorum, quae eiusmodi praestigias humanis inferunt oculis, alia sunt quae speciem tantum spectaculi pariunt, alia quae nihil ab eo quod ostenderint mentiuntur. fallunt imagine irides et arcus et talia; uere uidentur cometae, fulgores et similia pleraque.

And, so as to briefly grasp together all the phenomena of the same kind, some of the things that bring illusions of this sort to human eyes, deliver only the image of a wonder, while there are others that in no way deceive us in what they show. Rainbows and arcs and such things deceive with their appearance; while comets, meteors and many similar things are seen truly.

Rainbows are described in such a way as to emphasise their visibility but their inaccessibility is a form of deception. In short, Apuleius' depictions of phenomena at the borderline of air and aether in terms of human access are set to blur these cosmic borderlines. Thus, even in the mundane description of the terrestrial zone, Apuleius enacts the flight of Philosophy explicitly in his text by showing how, with him as our guide, we can describe air and aether. Thus, Apuleius' mundane descriptions are meant both to recall the tedious mapping in the preface, and to prepare the reader for the flight of fancy about to come.

Universal reading

The first major way in which the flight of the Philosopher appears in the exegesis is in the transition from the mundane description to the account of 'harmony' (*concordia*) and the 'praise of the universe' (*laudes mundi*). The transition to the

laudes mundi section is telling for how it betrays Apuleius' self-conscious transformation of his exegetical mode through the topic of the *concordia* of the Universe. In this transition, Apuleius highlights his own attitude and we are introduced to the idea of wonder at the Universe (*Mu.* 19.332):

uerum enim uero ut, quatenus possum, de uniuersitate quod sentio breuiter absoluiam, elementorum inter se tanta concordia est, aeris, maris atque terrae...

But for sure, to sum up briefly so far as I can what I think about the whole Universe, so great is the harmony of the elements among themselves, of the air, the sea, and the earth, that...

Furthermore, it is this harmony that ought to provoke wonder, so that it is 'less fitting to admire' (*ut admirari minus deceat*, *Mu.* 19.333) how the Universe works in terms of individual phenomena, than how the whole system operates (*Mu.* 19.333):

et quibusdam mirum uideri solet quod, cum ex diuersis atque inter se pugnantibus elementis mundi natura conflata sit, aridis atque fluxis, glacialibus et ignitis, tanto rerum diuortio nondum sit eius mortalitas dissoluta.

And it often seems surprising to some that, given that the nature of the Universe has been composed out of elements that are diverse and fighting among themselves, viz. dry and fluid, icy and fiery, yet its mortal nature has not been undone by so great a separation of things.

The transition between the scientific and philosophical/theological parts of the work has been seen as based on the key term *concordia*.⁶⁹ It is no coincidence that with the introduction of the concept of *concordia* the exegetical style changes as well.⁷⁰ Sandy notes the change of style as follows: '[t]he predominantly scientific presentation of the first part of the adaptation, which sets out in dry, technical language the meteorology and geography of the Greek model, gradually gives way to a more colourful and reverent mode of expression when Apuleius expands on the principle of *concordia*

⁶⁹ Müller (1939) 40–1, Beaujeu (1973) 327, Sandy (1997) 225.

⁷⁰ Sandy (1997) 225.

(harmony) among the three elements of air, water and earth'.⁷¹ While Sandy is right about this change, he does not explain exactly how this transformation is achieved.

There are four main changes to the exegetical mode in this section on Harmony (*concordia*) (*Mu.* 19.332–21.337) which also pave the way for the Universal Ruler to come. First, we have the use of analogies to understand the concept of harmony; second, a direct address to the reader; third, the quotation of Heraclitus; and fourth, the personification of Nature in the creation of Harmony. While these are discrete exegetical methods, Apuleius' discussion of Harmony employs them in an interlocking way. Furthermore, as we shall see, analogies, addresses, quotations and impersonations will also play a major role in the discussion of the Universal Ruler that follows. The use of analogies is explicitly made to introduce the human world into the abstract question of how opposing forces do not cause the destruction of the Universe. Analogies with the city and the sexes are followed by those of the arts of painting and music, and the series concludes with 'the grammarians' arts' (*grammaticorum artes*). The final analogy is, unlike the parallel passage in *Peri kosmou*, introduced by an imperative 'see' (*uide*) and the first-person 'I entreat (you)' (*quaeso*), as an explicit address to the reader, Faustinus. As we shall see, when the discussion of the agency of the Universal Ruler occurs later in the treatise, the roles of analogy and address are both significant. After this group of analogies, culminating in the address, we have the quotation of a Heraclitus fragment, which is the first since the Favorinus interlude, and which paves the way for several quotations to come in the Universal Ruler passage. Furthermore, the Heraclitus quotation leads into a key personification of Nature. Apuleius describes how Nature (*natura*) 'melded' (*temperauit*), like music (*ueluti musicam*), the substance of the whole Universe out of the discordant elements and 'poured together' (*confudit*) wet with dry, hot with cold, slow with fast, straight with oblique and 'formed' (*constituit*), as Heraclitus said, 'one out of all and all

⁷¹ Sandy (1997) 225.

out of one' (*unumque ex omnibus et ex uno omnia*). Nature's harmonious role then continues in how she 'furnished' (*ornauit*) land with sea and sky with sun and moon. This reiteration of the ending of the Heraclitus fragment, earlier quoted in Greek, not only diverges from the *Peri kosmou* as a Latin translation of the Greek text, but also insofar as it makes Nature the agent of harmony.⁷² The personification of Nature paves the way for the concept of Harmony (*concordia*) that now takes over the focus of the eulogy. This concept of Harmony is described as the 'balanced diversity of all things' (*aequalis... omnium diuersitas*, *Mu.* 21.337), which, 'taught by the law of Nature' (*docente ratione naturae*), we understand to be 'the parent of all, the beauty and eternity of the Universe' (*omniaparentis mundi amoenitatem aeternitatemque*). Here Apuleius' phrase *ratio naturae* explicitly glosses the earlier personification of Nature as she mutates into the concept of Harmony.

The *laudes mundi* (*Mu.* 22.337–23.341) that follow this account of *concordia* adds to the list of exegetical features we have encountered already and prepares the way for the account of the Universal Ruler. The section opens as follows (*Mu.* 22.337):

quid enim mundo praestantius? lauda, quam putas, speciem, portio a te laudabitur mundi; admirare, quam uoles, temperantiam, ordinationem, figuram: hic et per hunc illud quodcumque est inuenietur esse laudandum. nam quid, oro te, ornatum atque ordinatum uideri potest, quod non ab ipsius exemplo imitatura sit ratio? unde κόσμος graece nomen accepit.

For what is more outstanding than the Universe? Praise any sight you can think of and you will be praising a part of the Universe. Admire whatever quality you want to, such as moderation, order, or form: it will be the Universe that is found to deserve the praise, and that thing, whatever it may be, because of the Universe. For what, I ask you, can seem ornate and ordered, without a rational principle that has imitated the model provided by the Universe? That is why it received the name *kosmos* in Greek.

This impassioned address to the reader, Faustinus, to praise the Universe is a major expansion of the same mode of address

⁷² Apuleius' *natura* actually conflates the Greek *harmonia*, *dunamis* and *phusis*, which are used interchangeably as ordering principles at *Peri K.* 396b26–397a5.

used in the analogy of the grammatical arts. Furthermore, there is another aspect of this passage that harks back to earlier in the work. The reference to how the Universe ‘can seem ornate and ordered’ (*ornatum atque ordinatum uideri potest*) recalls how ‘the Universe is an ordered arrangement prepared for by the favour of god’ (*mundus est ornata ordinatio dei munere*, *Mu.* 1.270).⁷³ This recollection of the beginning of the treatise paves the way for the major parallels found at the introduction of the Universal Ruler, the first part of which I have already cited above (*Mu.* 24.341–2):

restat, quod caput est sermonis huius, ut super mundi rectore uerba faciamus. indigens quippe orationis huius uidebatur ratio, nisi de mundo reputantes, etsi minus curiose, at quoquo modo possemus, de deo diceremus. de rectore quippe omnium non, ut ait ille, silere melius est, sed uel parum dicere. uetus opinio est atque cogitationes omnium hominum penitus insedit, deum esse originis haberi auctorem deumque ipsum salutem esse et perseuerantiam earum, quas effecerit, rerum. neque ulla res est tam praestantibus uiribus, quae eius uiduata auxilio sui natura contenta sit.

As the principal theme of this treatise we still need to discuss the ruler of the Universe. Certainly the point of this presentation would seem to be lacking something if we did not, when contemplating the nature of the Universe, speak about god – albeit less meticulously, but nonetheless as best we can. For about him who governs all it is not, as that man (i.e. Plato) says, better to keep silent, but to speak at least a little. There is an ancient opinion, deep-seated in the thoughts of all humankind, that god is regarded as the author of The Beginning and is the preservation and staying power of all the things he has created. And nothing has such outstanding strength, as to be content with its own nature, if it were deprived of his aid.

Apuleius dubs this second half of his discussion ‘the principal theme of this treatise’ (*caput . . . sermonis huius*), an image that evokes the language of *De Platone* where it transitions to its ethical section.⁷⁴ This is, once again, a comment directed at Faustinus to pay attention; we are reaching the important part. The aside to Faustinus is not, however, the only part of this passage that recalls the preface. In particular, the flight of

⁷³ Harrison (2000) 188.

⁷⁴ *De Pl.* 2.1.19, *moralis philosophiae caput est*. Although Apuleius appears to have misinterpreted the use of *κεφαλαίως* in the *Peri K.* 397b10, the parallel in *De Platone* lends support to the idea the Apuleius is emphasising this part of his work.

Philosophy is brought back to mind. First, the reference to the 'point' (*ratio*) of the 'presentation' (*oratio*) as 'lacking' (*indigna*) without the discussion of god, recalls the depiction of Philosophy as 'not thinking herself unworthy' (*nec indignam se existimavit*, *Mu. pref.* 286) in her role in disputing both human and divine matters. The correlation between the potential lack in this speech without a discussion of god and the credentials of Philosophy at the opening of the treatise means that at this juncture we are to imagine that we need Philosophy more than ever before to debate the Universal Ruler. This is especially the case when Apuleius makes a reference to what 'that man (i.e. Plato) says' (*ut ait ille*) in terms of Plato's (and his own) reluctance to speak about the supreme god elsewhere.⁷⁵ This potential problem is, however, immediately followed by a paraphrase of the very passage of Plato's *Laws* that ends the whole treatise (*Mu.* 38.375). While here we are told of an 'ancient opinion' (*uetus opinio*) 'deep-seated' (*penitus insedit*) in the thoughts of all men that god is the 'author of The Beginning' (*originis... auctorem*) and all things need him; in the *Laws* passage we hear of the 'ancient doctrine' (*uetus... ratio*) that holds that god 'enters into' (*penetrat*) the 'beginnings' (*principia*), ends and middle of all things.⁷⁶ This pre-emptive reference to the conclusive Platonic passage is especially pertinent here when between them Apuleius refers to the 'opinion' (*opinio*) of the 'poets' (*uates*), who dare to go so far as to say that all things are full of Jupiter and that god is present and thus attainable to our senses. This reference to the poets' daring recalls the image of humankind who 'dared' to follow Philosophy on her flight in the preface. Yet the distinction is clear between the poets (and prophets) who see the divine as manifest in the world and the way Philosophy allows us to access the divine through our minds. Once again, to fast-forward to the end of the work, Apuleius, following *Peri kosmou*, fills the final sections of his treatise with poetic quotations, from Homer, Heraclitus, Empedocles and an Orphic Hymn to Zeus. Apuleius supplements

⁷⁵ *Soc.* 3.124; *Apol.* 64. 8.

⁷⁶ The Orphic Hymn to Zeus at *Mu.* 37.372 has already pre-empted several of these features outlined in the *Laws*.

these quotations with lines from Ennius and Virgil. In fact, just before the translation from the *Laws*, where *Peri kosmou* does not have a comparable poetic quotation, Apuleius quotes the following line from the *Georgics* (*Mu.* 38.374 = *Geo.* 4.221–2):

deum uero ire per omnes ‘terrasque tractusque maris caelumque profundum’.

Meanwhile, god extends throughout all ‘the lands and expanse of ocean, and the heights of heaven’.

This is not to show how god traverses through these realms, but how he is manifest in them, for even the bee can be seen as ‘part of the divine mind’ (*Geo.* 4.220).⁷⁷ Thus, Apuleius demonstrates how he will use the ‘old opinion’ recorded by Plato to finesse this ‘opinion’ of the poets. Finally, in this passage, we see how Apuleius moves from speaking about god to his power and, specifically, the problematic issue of his agency being carried out by Providence. This topic is, yet again, brought up at the end of the treatise, not only in the *Laws* passage, in the form of ‘Necessity the avenger’ (*ultrix Necessitas*), but also in the discussion of the Fates that introduces the *Georgics* quotation. In short, this introduction of the Universal Ruler both recalls the flight of Philosophy and sets the groundwork for the conclusion of the work in the dynamic between poets and philosophers in terms of how to describe the nature of divine power. As with the topic of *concordia*, the *rector mundi* is approached through analogies. The series of analogies used to demonstrate the Universal Ruler’s power, and how it is distributed and delegated through a single gesture, is breathtaking. We have the main *exemplum* of the King of Persia (*Mu.* 26.346–27.350), which is supported by the lesser analogies of the machine-makers (*Mu.* 27.351), the puppet-masters (*Mu.* 27.351), the falling shapes (*Mu.* 28.352), animals and their habitats (*Mu.* 28.352–3) and the chorus leader and the chorus (*Mu.* 29.355). Then, we have a brief respite from the wave of analogies, for Apuleius to reiterate the nature of his power, through a summarising personification (*Mu.* 30.357):

⁷⁷ It also recalls the same second line use in *Ecl.* 4.51 to make the same point, explicitly related to fate.

The flight of Philosophy

cum igitur rex omnium et pater, quem tantummodo animae oculis nostrae cogitationes uident, machinam omnem iugiter per circuitum suis legibus terminatam, claram et sideribus relucentem speciesque innumeras modo propalam, saepe contactas, ab uno, ut supra dixi, principio agitari iubet, simile istuc esse bellicis rebus hinc liceat arbitrari.

So when the king and the father of all things, whom our thoughts can only see through the eyes of the soul, orders that all this machinery, bound forever by his laws to a circular movement, bright and shining with the stars, and its myriad forms that are not only openly visible, but are often hidden, be moved by one beginning, as I have said above, it would be permissible to judge it analogous to matters of war.

This summarising personification of the Universal Ruler as delegating power through a singular order is made with the swift reminder of our limited access to him. Nonetheless, the mention of seeing through the eyes of the divine soul and thoughts once more reiterates the flight of Philosophy, especially in how it differs from the conception of the poets.

This recollection of the preface is made even more explicit in the next round of analogies, which begins with the trumpeter in war. This analogy is immediately followed by a reiteration of the question of the organisation of things divine and human which ‘is ruled’ (*regitur*) by a ‘single rudder’ (*uno moderamine*), which ‘is blocked from sight’ (*nullis oculis obuia*) and (in line with ancient theories of vision) we can only access the targets of ‘mind firing off the prick of its light’ (*mens aciem suae lucis intendit*). This offers the perfect transition to the analogy of the soul in the body, in terms of their shared invisibility, once again an image first introduced in the flight of Philosophy (*Mu.* 31.359–60):

nec tamen hoc uel illi ad moliendum uel nobis ad intelligendum obest. de inferiore licet imagine capiamus exempla. anima in homine non uidetur et tamen fateantur omnes necesse est huius opera omnia quae per hominem praeclara fiunt prouenire nec ipsius animae qualitatem ac figuram oculis occurrere, sed momentis ab ea gestorum intellegi, qualis et quanta sit. omne quippe humanae uitae praesidium ingenio eius est paratum: cultus agrorum ususque frugum, artificum sollertia, prouentus artium, commoditates uitae humanae. quid de legibus dicam, quae ad mansuefaciendos homines inuentae sunt? quid de ciuilibus institutis ac moribus, qui nunc populorum otiosis conuentibus frequentantur, et asperitate bellorum pacata, mitigantur

quiete? nisi forte tam iniustus rerum aestimator potest esse, qui haec eadem de deo neget, quem uideat esse uiribus exsuperantissimis, augustissima specie, immortalis aevi, genitorem uirtutum ipsamque uirtutem. unde nihil mirum est, si mortales oculi non capiunt eius adspexit, quando diuinorum operum uestigiis sit perspicuus atque manifestus.

And, however, this [i.e. his invisibility] does not hinder either his own actions or our understanding of them. Let us take out examples from a lower level of reality. The soul is invisible in man, and yet everyone must admit that it carries out all of the notable actions of mankind, and, that even though neither the quality nor form of the soul meets our eyes, nonetheless what kind of thing it is and how great it is are understood by the impact of the things achieved by it. For the whole safeguard for human life has been acquired through the innate ability of the soul: the cultivation of fields, and the use of their produce, the enjoyment of fruits, the skill of artisans, the products of the arts and the advantages of human life. What should I say about laws, which were invented for civilising man? What about civil institutions and practice, which are today espoused by peoples in peace and, when the harshness of war has been calmed, are relaxed in repose? Unless by chance so unjust a judge can possibly exist as to deny these same things about god, whom he sees to possess the most remarkable strength, the most august appearance, immortal timespan, the begetter and embodiment of virtue. For which reason there is no wonder if mortal eyes do not catch sight of him, because through the traces of his divine works he is visible and manifest.

By this point we have returned to that ‘old opinion’ of the poets – god is manifest in all his works – and the soul has been used as an appropriate analogy to make the point. This return to the poets is emphasised by a quotation from Empedocles, followed by quotations from Homer and Ennius. The series of analogies finally ends with the following flurry (*Mu.* 35.365):

postremo, quod est in triremi gubernator, in curru rector, praecentor in choris, lex in urbe, dux in exercitu, hoc est in mundo deus.

Ultimately, as the pilot to the ship, the driver to the chariot, the chorus-leader to the chorus, the law to the city, the leader to the army, so god is to the Universe.

The following discussion of the name of god and Fate eventually leads to the culmination of the extended account of the *rector mundi* which ends with the translation of a passage from Plato’s *Laws*. In many ways the end of *De mundo* is the key to

the correspondence between cosmology and ethics in the entire work (*Mu.* 38.374):

non frustra arbitrabitur qui audiet Platonis haec uerba: ‘deus namque, sicut uetus’, inquit, ‘continet ratio, principia et fines et media rerum omnium penetrat, quae illustrat ac curru uolucris superfertur; eundem deum ultrix Necessitas semper et ubique comitatur, eorum qui a sacra lege discesserint uindex futura; quam faciet ille mitificam, qui statim a tenero et ipsis incunabulis intellexit, extimuit eique se totum dedit atque permisit’.

He will not judge in vain who listens to these words of Plato: ‘Indeed god’, he says, ‘as the ancient doctrine holds, penetrates and illuminates the beginnings, ends, and middles of all things and he soars over them in his flying chariot. Necessity the avenger always and everywhere accompanies this same god, and is ready to punish those who deviate from the sacred law; yet he will make her irenic, he who immediately understood and feared her from his earliest childhood and his very cradle, and gave and entrusted himself wholly to her.’

Apuleius adds the image of the ‘flying chariot’ (*curru uolucris*) from the *Phaedrus* (246e) to the two passages from the *Laws* conflated by the author of *Peri kosmou*.⁷⁸ This supplement takes us back to the chariot analogy mentioned in the list of analogies, but more importantly, to the opening preface and the flight of Philosophy (*uolucrique curriculo*).⁷⁹ Both *De Platone* and *De mundo* move from their biographical and pedagogic prefaces, through stages of equivalent exposition, into more ‘fervent’ authorial protreptic (ethics and the universal reading).⁸⁰

The task of the translator: interpreting *De deo Socratis*

Apuleius’ opening image of the flight of Philosophy in *De mundo* not only explains how it is possible for mankind to investigate the Universe, but also appropriates the catascopic perspective of the *rector mundi* as its guiding principle of unity.

⁷⁸ Regen (1971) 35 n. 137.

⁷⁹ Bajoni (1994) 1796. On the chariot analogy in Manilius, see Bajoni (2004) 315.

⁸⁰ Sandy (1997) 225–6, ‘[a]s in the concluding parts of the *On the God of Socrates* and *On Plato and his Doctrine*, Apuleius seems to warm to the subject and to write with more engaged fervour’.

This image also grounds Apuleius' methodology of universal reading in his treatise, transcending previous writers' mundane descriptions of the earth by generating the ethical force of an authorial protreptic. Furthermore, the explicit connection between the flight of Philosophy and the *rector mundi* is made in a series of references and analogies (especially of the immortal soul), concluding in Apuleius' translation of a passage of Plato's *Laws* by importing the chariot image of the *Phaedrus*. Apuleius' supplement to his Greek source (*Peri kosmou*) and conflation of Platonic texts legitimate the explicitly 'Platonic' conception of his work, despite the opening claim to be following Aristotle and Theophrastus. Yet another way in which we saw Apuleius supplementing his Greek source is in the role of other intermediary powers to support the *rector mundi* (24.343; 27.350–1). Nonetheless, the presence of intermediaries did not transform *De mundo* in terms of its guiding, top-down methodology – whether from the image of the flight of Philosophy or the *rector mundi*. Yet the focus on intermediaries expanded in Apuleius' lecture *De deo Socratis* not only allocates a more explicit role for Plato throughout the work, and not merely as a fitting end-point as in *De mundo*, but also transforms the methodology of the lecture into one of mediation.

As we shall see, *De deo Socratis* mediates the biographical exegesis of *De Platone* and the catascopic perspective of the exegete of *De mundo* explicitly through the figure of the *daemon* as the human soul. Furthermore, it is the image of the cultivation of the *daemon* as one's soul (*animus*) that conflates the ostensible topic of Platonic demonology into an ethical account of the exemplary status of Socrates. Amid this discussion, Apuleius plays a mediating role of 'translator' (*interpreter*) of Plato's divine message that is related to the interpretive role of the flight of Philosophy in *De mundo*. Yet, as *De mundo* mobilises the catascopic perspective of both Philosophy and the *rector mundi* in terms of an authorial protreptic, Apuleius appropriates the *exemplum* of Socrates to introduce an ethical dimension into his task as translator. As I see it, then, the best way to begin to appreciate the dual force of Apuleius' task as a translator will be through the way in which the literal issue

of translation is configured in the literary-historical questions surrounding the work.

As we discussed earlier, as a lecture on Platonic demonology and the *daimonion* of Socrates, *De deo Socratis* is closely related to two other roughly contemporaneous treatments of the same topic written in Greek: Plutarch's dialogue *On the Daimonion of Socrates* and Maximus of Tyre's *Orations* 8–9.⁸¹ But even though the shared topic calls for comparison, Apuleius' treatment differs considerably from those of Plutarch and Maximus in three key respects: the explicit role of Plato in describing Platonic demonology; the discussion of this demonology before the particular example of Socrates is introduced; and his addition of a finale of protreptic. These three differences, as we shall see, are intimately related to his role as translator (*interpretes*), in terms of transferring Plato's divine message and the example of Socrates to his audience. The former can be understood by seeing how Apuleius alone describes demonology as a specifically Platonic theory; the latter by appreciating how the example of Socrates is intimately bound up with the protreptic conclusion.

While Plutarch's dialogue teems with Platonic resonances, the explicit role for Plato is limited to part of Simmias' recollections (578f–579d).⁸² Simmias recalls how, in Egypt, he, Plato, the otherwise unknown Ellopion of Peparethos and Chonuphis of Memphis used to have many a philosophical discussion (578f). He then relates the story of the translation of an oracular pronouncement by Chonuphis. This leads into a story of Plato's interpretation of a Delian oracular pronouncement, 'recalling the Egyptian' (579c), as a call to turn to geometry. A telling tale of Plato's inheritance of Egyptian learning it may be, but it does not underpin the discussion of either Socrates' *daimonion* or the theory of *daimones* as specifically Platonic.⁸³ As for Maximus' *Orations*, there is just the one passing reference to Plato marking him as possessing a *daimōn* like Socrates,

⁸¹ For a summary of the main debates in the comparison, see Harrison (2000) 136–40.

⁸² On Platonic resonances, see Brenk (1996) and Pelling (2010) 112.

⁸³ Although Pelling (2010) 112 asks: 'might Plutarch be providing his own counterpart to Plato in a way that interlocks with the attempts of characters in the text to explore a counterpart to the Platonic Socrates?'

Pythagoras, Zeno and Diogenes (*Or.* 8. 8.179–180). Plato's presence in a list of prominent philosophers and their *daimones* and his general absence from the speeches in general distinguishes Maximus' broad philosophical interests as a performer of Second Sophistic *paideia* from the more proselytising Platonist philosophical mission of Apuleius, as we found it performed in *De Platone*.⁸⁴ In both cases, the absence of an explicit and pervasive role for Plato in Plutarch and Maximus in no way suggests that they were oblivious to Plato's (and later Platonist) theories of demonology. Both Plutarch and Maximus most definitely were, and there are references in each of their texts.⁸⁵ Nonetheless, it is essential for an understanding of Apuleius' aims in *De deo Socratis*, and elsewhere in the corpus, that his is the lone text among the three that makes explicit mention of Plato's role in the development of a theory of demonology.⁸⁶

Apuleius' explicit Platonism in the lecture has a significant impact on *De deo Socratis*' other two fundamental differences from the accounts of Plutarch and Maximus: the transition from the discussion of *daemones* to Socrates' *daimonion* and the addition of the concluding protreptic. By making Plato's role explicit, Apuleius is not discussing Socrates' *daimonion* as a curiosity that needs to be grounded in a general Platonic theory of demonology, but how Plato conceived of *daemones* in general and how the specific example of Socrates' personal *daemon* – the *daimonion* – fits into that theory. Furthermore, this explicitly Platonic framing of the discussion of Socrates' *daemon* becomes the first stage in transforming a discussion of Platonic demonology into an ethical protreptic. If in *De*

⁸⁴ Trapp (1997) xxv, 'Overtly, therefore, Maximus is not a Platonist, because to him philosophical "-isms" are an aberration from what philosophy ought to be'. Contrast Trapp (1997) xxv n. 33, 'the philosophical content of the *Orations* is in practice consistently Platonizing, whatever the explicit account of philosophy and his own orientation within it Maximus may give'. For a different conception of this issue, in terms of Maximus donning different philosophical *personae* in different speeches, see Koniaris (1983).

⁸⁵ For example, there are verbal connections between the *Symposium* account of *daimones* and Maximus' account. Both Plutarch and Maximus allude to classic Platonic passages that discuss Socrates' *daimonion*.

⁸⁶ Trapp (1997) 68 fudges this striking absence by stating that, 'The Platonist credentials of the lectures [*Or.* 8 and 9] are effectively established by the choice of topic.'

mundo such a transition was enacted by the way the image of the flight of Philosophy mirrored the catascopic perspective of the *rector mundi*, in *De deo Socratis* it is the transition from the role of *daemones* to the example of Socrates and from the example of Socrates to the protreptic call for us to cultivate the philosophical life.

If the comparison with other treatments of the topic help us to appreciate the singularity of *De deo Socratis*, so too does a reconsideration of the structure of the text. The lecture has usually been divided into four sections:⁸⁷ the initial classification of beings into gods and humans (*Soc.* 1.115–5.132); the role of *daemones* as intermediaries between them (*Soc.* 6.132–16.156); the example of Socrates' *daimonion* (*Soc.* 17.157–20.167); and the concluding protreptic (*Soc.* 21.168–24.178). But problems at once arise with this structure. For one, the topic of Socrates' *daimonion* appears amid the general discussion of *daemones* and not in a new and separate section. Furthermore, the introduction of Socrates changes the direction of the discussion of *daemones* in a way that is made explicit by Apuleius. After treating the existence, location, and attributes of *daemones* and how their emotional nature distances them from the gods, Apuleius states that rather than discuss such matters (*Soc.* 14.150):

id potius praestiterit Latine dissertare uarias species daemonum philosophis perhiberi, quo liquidius et plenius de praesagio Socratis deque eius amico numine cognoscatis.

What would be preferable for me is to lecture in Latin on the various species of *daemones* presented by the philosophers, so that you may learn more clearly and fully about the premonition of Socrates and his companion divinity.

Thus the topic of Socrates' *daimonion* is introduced in direct response to the way the discussion of *daemones* had been developing and, most importantly, his example initiates a particular daemonic theory that will become central to the rest of the lecture: the idea of the *daemon* as the embodied human soul.

The second problem with the way in which the text has been divided is that there is an implicit protreptic already under way

⁸⁷ Harrison (2000) 144, with n. 27.

within the discussion of Socrates; it therefore cannot be deemed a separate section somehow after the topic of Socrates' *daimonion* has been dealt with. Before the beginning of the protreptic, Apuleius' depicts Socrates as *uir animo perfecte bonus* (*Soc.* 20.167), which not only recalls earlier account of Socrates as *uir adprime perfectus* but also the conception of a *bonus daemon* as an *animus uirtute perfectus* (*Soc.* 15.150). Furthermore, the opening of the protreptic itself hinges on the role of Socrates (*Soc.* 21.167):

quin potius nos quoque Socratis exemplo et commemoratione erigimur ac nos secundo studio philosophiae paris similium numinum cupientes permittimus?

Why are we not also encouraged by the example and remembrance of Socrates and why don't we entrust ourselves to the beneficial study of the same sort of philosophy, longing after similar divinities?

Therefore there is no clear division between the topic of Socrates' *daemon* and the concluding protreptic, just as there is no division between the general discussion of Socrates' *daemon* and *daemones* in general. In fact, it is the discussion of the *daemon* as the embodied 'human soul' (*animus humanus*) that acts as the pivot for both the introduction of Socrates and his exemplary role in the concluding protreptic. Here we have instead a prefiguring of the key image of the cultivation of the *daemon* – as the *animus humanus* – as the protreptic oath of allegiance to philosophy.

As with *De Platone* and *De mundo*, it is worth looking in detail at the transition between topics in order to gain a full understanding of Apuleius' methodology. For *De deo Socratis*, this means looking closely at how Apuleius uses the role of Plato in the introduction of *daemones* and how he makes the example of Socrates' *daemon* the transitional moment for the concluding protreptic.

Introducing daemones, interpreting Plato

The introduction of *daemones* occurs amid a general discussion of the Universe, its tripartite nature (gods, astral gods and

men). Apuleius rehearses Plato's doctrine, as gleaned from the *Symposium*, that gods and men do not mix (*Soc.* 4.1289):

nam, ut idem Plato ait, nullus deus miscetur hominibus, sed hoc praecipuum eorum sublimitatis specimen est, quod nulla adtreccatione nostra contaminantur. pars eorum tantummodo obtutu hebeti uisuntur, ut sidera, de quorum adhuc et magnitudine et coloribus homines ambigunt, ceteri autem solo intellectu neque prompto noscuntur. quod quidem mirari super diis immortalibus nequaquam congruerit, cum alioquin et inter homines, qui fortunae munere opulenti elatus et usque ad regni nutabilem suggestum et pendulum tribunal euectus est, raro aditu sit, longe remotis arbitris in quibusdam dignitatis suae penetralibus degens. parit enim conuersatio contemptum, raritas conciliat admirationem.

For, as that same Plato says, no god mingles with mankind, but it is sure proof of their sublimity that they are contaminated by none of our touching. Some of them are barely seen by our clouded gaze, as with the stars, whose size and hues men still debate, whereas others are known through the intellect alone, and not out in the open. It would in no way be fitting to marvel at this in the case of the immortal gods, given that at another level among men too, the one who has been elevated by the rich reward of fortune and carried to the tottery platform and dangling dais of royalty, is rarely accessible, with critics kept well away, and spending his life in the inner chambers, as one might say, of his own majesty. For familiarity breeds contempt, while staying scarce wins admiration.

This analogy of the king for gods' inaccessibility to mortals recalls the King of Persia analogy in *De mundo* (*Mu.* 26.346–27.350). It is followed, however, by an intervention from an imagined hostile interlocutor who, dubbing Apuleius *orator*, proceeds to ask if he is to follow 'Plato's heavenly . . . but almost inhuman verdict' (*caelestem . . . sed paene inhumanam sententiam*, *Soc.* 5.129) and uses scenes from Virgil's *Aeneid* to make his objection clear, before finally asking (*Soc.* 5.131–2):

nam et ius iurandum Iouis iurandum dicitur, ut ait Ennius. quid igitur censes? iurabo per Iouem lapidem Romano uetustissimo ritu? atque si Platonis uera sententia est, numquam se deum cum homine communicare, facilius me audierit lapis quam Iuppiter.

For the swearing of oaths is said to be swearing by Jupiter, as Ennius says. What then is your judgement? Shall I swear by Jupiter the Stone in that primeval Roman ritual? Well, if Plato's opinion is true, that a god never

communicates with mankind, a stone would hear me more easily than would Jupiter.⁸⁸

As a response to this interruption, Apuleius literally speaks for Plato in what is, I submit, the most astonishing moment of Platonic impersonation in the entire Apuleian corpus (*Soc.* 6.132–3):

non usque adeo – responderit enim Plato pro sententia sua mea uoce – non usque adeo – inquit – seiunctos et alienatos a nobis deos praedico, ut ne uota quidem nostra ad illos arbitrer peruenire. neque enim illos a cura rerum humanarum, sed contrectatione sola remoui. ceterum sunt quaedam diuinae mediae potestates inter summum aethera et infimas terras in isto intersitae aeris spatio, per quas et desideria nostra et merita ad eos commeant. hos Graeci nomine δαίμονας nuncupant, inter terricolae caelicolasque uectores hinc precum inde donorum, qui ultro citro portant hinc petitiones inde suppetias ceu quidam utriusque interpretes et salutigeri. per hos eosdem – ut Plato in *Symposio* autumat – cuncta denuntiata et magorum uaria miracula omnesque praesagiorum species reguntur.

I do not – Plato might respond in defence of his opinion via my voice – I do not declare the gods – says he – so far separated and alienated from us that I would judge that even our prayers do not get through to them. I have not removed them from concern for human affairs, only from contact with them. But there are certain intermediary divine powers, located in that space of the *aer* between the zenith *aether* and the nadir earth, and it is through these that our desires and deserts pass on to the gods. The Greeks call these by the term *daimones*, and between the earth-dwellers and heaven-dwellers they are messengers, carrying prayers from here and gifts from there, who transport petitions from here and support from there as if go-betweens and goodwill-bringers from both sides. Through these same powers – so Plato asserts in the *Symposium* – all annunciations, the magicians’ repertoire of miracles, and every form of presentiments are controlled.⁸⁹

This outrageous impersonation of Plato enacts the transition from a general picture of the Platonic cosmos to the specific

⁸⁸ I thank John Henderson (pers. comm.) for pointing out to me the clinching puns: *ius* ~ *Iouis* and *la-pi-s* ~ *Iup-pi-ter*.

⁸⁹ I have omitted speech marks from my text and translation because precision on quite when Apuleius’ impersonation of Plato’s voice begins and ends prescinds the deliberately deployed vagueness. The reference to the Greek *daimones* has been understood as marking Apuleius’ voice returning, although there is no reason not to imagine Plato teaching Apuleius’ (Roman) audience about this (Greek) term. Even the reference to the *Symposium* could be an aside amid Plato’s own exegesis of his work.

topic of Platonic demonology. It also acts as the high point and conclusion to what has been a version of the methodology of biographical exegesis, as references to Plato have been accumulating through the speech so far. This transition to the topic of *daemones* and the progression of Platonic references culminating in Apuleius' impersonation of Plato's *sententia* in his own voice are, as I argue, intimately related.⁹⁰ However, to fully appreciate this correlation between the topic and methodology, we must track how we reached this point in the lecture. Then we will be able to uncover how Apuleius' direct impersonation of Plato was set up by careful balancing between Platonic biographical exegesis and his own interpretive exegetical voice from the very opening of the speech.

The speech started with Plato dividing the nature of things into different living beings and decreeing the gods to be the highest. Here we are very much in the world of the biographical exegesis of *De Platone*, but without the biographical introduction (*Soc.* I.115):

Plato omnem naturam rerum, quod eius ad animalia praecipua pertineat, trifariam diuisit censuitque esse summos deos.

Plato divided the whole nature of things – as concerns the chief living beings – into three parts and judged gods to be the highest.

Apuleius then interrupts this biographical exegesis grounded in Plato's philosophising actions (*diuisit, censuit*) by adding a point of clarification that brings his audience into play (*Soc.* I.116):

summum, medium et infimum fac intellegas non modo loci disclusione uerum etiam naturae dignitate, quae et ipsa neque uno neque gemino modo sed pluribus cernitur. ordiri tamen manifestius fuit a loci dispositione. nam proinde ut maiestas postulabat, diis immortalibus caelum dicauit, quos quidem deos caelites partim uisu usurpamus, alios intellectu uestigamus.

By 'highest', 'middle' and 'lowest', make sure you understand not only separation in place, but also distinction in nature, which can be discerned neither in one way, nor in two, but in many. Yet it was clearer to start with the separation of place. For since their majesty demanded it, he [Plato] assigned heaven

⁹⁰ I recall owing the basic framework of this line of argument to the experience of listening to Trzaskoma (2003).

to the immortal gods – those heavenly gods some of whom we apprehend through sight, while others we trace through our understanding.

The call for an audience member to ‘make sure you understand’ (*fac intellegas*) is followed by the resumption of biographical exegesis with ‘Plato assigned’ (*dicauit*). Yet this does not last long. Instead the focus remains on the imagined community between the speaker and the audience with the use of first-person plurals: ‘we apprehend by sight’ (*uisu usurpamus*) and ‘we trace through our understanding’ (*intellectu uestigamus*). If this was, as it is now, the opening of the speech, it immediately sets the tone for the dynamic of methodologies of the work ahead.⁹¹ Plato’s agency is a vital point of reference, but so is Apuleius’ glossing interpretation. Already we can see how the *interpres* will mediate between Platonic doctrine and his audience.

Apuleius expands on this opening reference to our access to the heavens through the senses and intellect with a discussion of visible and invisible gods. Once again, in both sections, the authority of Plato is at the forefront of the discussion, amid the conflation of speaker and audience. For visible gods – i.e. the sun, moon and planets – Apuleius claims (*Soc.* 2.120–1):

in eodem uisibilibus deorum numero cetera quoque sidera, qui cum Platone sentis, locato: *Arcturum pluuiasque Hyadas geminosque Triones* aliosque itidem radiantis deos, quibus caeli chorum comptum et coronatum suda tempestate uisimus, pictis noctibus seuera gratia, toruo decore, suspicientes in hoc perfectissimo mundi, ut ait Ennius, *clipeo* miris fulguribus uariata caelamina.

If you believe as Plato does, place the remaining stars into this same class of visible gods: *Arcturus and the rainy Hyades and twin Triones* and similarly the other radiating gods, with which we see the heavenly chorus adorned and garlanded in clear weather; when nights are painted with an austere charm and a keen grace, looking up at the multicoloured decorations gleaming with flashing stars on this purely perfect ‘shield’, as Ennius says, of a Universe.

⁹¹ The so-called ‘False-Preface’ of *Soc.* is a vital issue that I shall not weigh in on here. For a reading that entertains the possibility of the ‘False-Preface’ being part of *Soc.*, see Fletcher (2006) 209–14. However, I see no problem with Apuleius opening his lecture in this direct way. The seemingly missing cross-reference to later in the speech can also be easily explained.

Here we return to the single interlocutor and their agreement with Plato, but then poetic quotations from Virgil and Ennius are used and supplemented with more ‘we’ thinking. Then when we reach the invisible gods, Apuleius lodges a couplet by Ennius amid more ‘we’ thinking and ... Plato is no longer there (*Soc.* 2.121–2):

est aliud deorum genus, quod natura uisibus nostris denegauit, nec non tamen intellectu eos rimabundi contemplamur, acie mentis acrius contemplantes. quorum in numero sunt illi duodecim numero situ nominum in duo uersus ab Ennio coartati: *Iuno, Vesta, Minerua, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars, Mercurius, Iouis, Neptunus, Vulcanus, Apollo* ceterique id genus, quorum nomina quidem sunt nostris auribus iam diu cognita, potentiae uero animis coniectatae per uarias utilitates in uita agenda animaduersas in iis rebus, quibus eorum singuli curant.

There is another genre of deity, which nature has denied to our vision, but which we are able to contemplate by examining them with our intellect, contemplating them more keenly with the mind’s eye. In their number are those twelve whose names Ennius has crammed into the space of two lines: *Iuno, Vesta, Minerua, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars, Mercurius, Iouis, Neptunus, Vulcanus, Apollo*, and others of the type, whose names have long been familiar to our ears, but whose powers have been inferred by our minds, through the various functions observed through our lived experience in the matters over which they each hold sway.

Needless to say, Apuleius’ use of poetic quotation has been emphasised by his readers, especially in showing how he makes the visible and invisible gods vivid for his audience with the use of well-known Roman authors.⁹² But this homing in on the quotations misses the nuances of the way Apuleius mixes up Plato’s authority, the targeting of an individual interlocutor, and the inclusive ‘we’ thinking that surrounds them. In fact, it is sensitivity to this subtle variation that gives added force to the impassioned outburst that Apuleius uses to introduce invisible deities (*Soc.* 3.122–3), targeting those people whom not only he, as a philosopher, but also his audience would clearly wish to distance themselves from, including ‘the mob uninitiated in philosophy’ (*profana philosophiae turba*) and those ‘deprived

⁹² On the use of Lucretius in this passage and elsewhere in the Apuleian corpus, see Zimmerman (2006).

of true reason' (*priua uerae rationis*) and 'lacking in religious observance' (*inops religionis*). This outburst then paves the way for a timely return to Plato's authority and his account of these invisible gods (*Soc.* 3.123–4):

quos deos Plato existimat naturas incorporalis, animalis, neque fine ullo neque exordio, sed prorsus ac retro aeuernas, a corporis contagione suapte natura remotas, ingenio ad summam beatitudinem perfectio, nullius extrarii boni participatione sed ex sese bonas et ad omnia competentia sibi promptu facili, simplici, libero, absoluto.

These gods Plato thinks have natures that are incorporeal, animate, with neither end nor beginning, but eternal as to past and future, removed by their nature from contagion by the body, with an inner ability perfected to attain the highest blessedness, participating in no external good, but good in and of themselves and with a ready, simple, free and absolute access to all things that concern them.

Apuleius then transitions, albeit briefly, to a discussion of the supreme deity and once again, Plato is called upon for his verdict. Yet, rather than somehow glossing his master's words, Apuleius asks how he, in his mediocrity, is supposed to discuss the proclamations of Plato, an almost divine figure, blessed with heavenly eloquence (*Soc.* 3.124):

quorum parentem, qui omnium rerum dominator atque auctor est, solum ab omnibus nexibus patiendi aliquid gerendiue, nulla uice ad alicuius rei munia obstrictum, cur ego nunc dicere exordiar, cum Plato caelesti facundia praeditus, aequiparabilia diis immortalibus disserens, frequentissime praedicet hunc solum maiestatis incredibili quadam nimietate et ineffabili non posse penuria sermonis humani quauis oratione uel modice comprehendere, uix sapientibus uiris, cum se uigore animi, quantum licuit, a corpore remouerunt, intellectum huius dei, id quoque interdum, uelut in artissimis tenebris rapidissimo coruscamine lumen candidum intermicare? missum igitur hunc locum faciam, in quo non mihi quidem tantum, sed ne Platoni quidem meo quierunt ulla uerba pro amplitudine rei suppetere, ac iam rebus mediocritatem meam longe superantibus receptui canam tandemque orationem de caelo in terram deuocabo.

Their parent, who is the master and author of all things, released from all ties of being acted upon or acting, by no change of circumstances constrained to perform duties of any particular matter, why should I now begin to speak of him, when Plato, endowed with heavenly eloquence, lecturing on the same level as the immortal gods, very regularly proclaims that he alone, because

of the incredible and ineffable abundance of his majesty, cannot be comprehended, even slightly, in any speech whatsoever, given the poverty of human language, and that scarcely does this god's intellect shine through to wise men, when through the power of the mind they have removed themselves from the body as far as they can, and then only intermittently, like a bright light with the swiftest flicker in the deepest darkness? I shall, therefore, give this topic a miss, in which no words have proven sufficient for the magnitude of the matter, and not only in my own case, but for my Plato as well; I will sound a retreat from matters far above my mediocrity, and finally call my speech down from heaven to earth.

In this passage Apuleius' *recusatio* works by directly associating Plato's theories and discourse with the supreme deity, something we have already seen happen implicitly in *De mundo*. Yet here the characterisation of Plato's divinity is not only emphatically described, but also demonstrated by the fact that he 'very regularly proclaims' (*frequentissime praedicet*) on a topic that is beyond human comprehension. Nonetheless, Apuleius' dismissal of this profound topic also carries with it an association with Plato that seems to undermine his previously extolled divinity and authorised proclamations on the supreme deity. Indeed this direct association with Plato paves the way for Apuleius' impersonation of Plato's *sententia* about the *daemones*. In retracing our steps through Apuleius' methodology and the way in which he combines Plato's voice with his own in addressing his audience, this moment of conflation of the master and pupil's voice is all the more striking. It also shows how the absence of Plato in the following sections must be explained.

After the total impersonation of Plato's voice, Apuleius does not mention him again in a series of related discussions about the nature of *daemones*. He explains the particular provenances of *daemones* in realms of prophecy (*Soc.* 6.133–7.137), including dream visions, divination and oracles, with a strong focus on both Roman *exempla* and religious practices.⁹³ He then accounts for the location and physical substance of *daemones* (*Soc.* 8.137–11.145), using a combination of Aristotle's authority and more Roman poetic quotations. The next section (*Soc.*

⁹³ For the Roman colour of this section, see Harrison (2000) 151–2.

12.145–14.150) shows how the *daemones* feel emotion and the resulting distinction between them and the heavenly gods. Then comes the pivotal moment at which the specific example of Socrates is introduced in terms of the topic of the embodied *daemon* as the human soul (*Soc.* 14.150–15.154). It is only after this discussion that Plato returns to the account of *daemones* that have never been embodied in humans and which have a guiding and protecting role over mankind instead (*Soc.* 16.155):

ex hac igitur sublimiore daemonum copia Plato autumat singulis hominibus in uita agenda testes et custodes additos, qui nemini conspicui semper adsint, arbitri omnium non modo actorum uerum etiam cogitatorum. at ubi uita edita remeandum est, eundem illum, qui nobis praeditus fuit, raptare ilico et trahere ueluti custodiam suam ad iudicium atque illic in causa dicunda adistere, si qua commentiatur, redarguere, si qua uera dicat, adseuerare, prorsus illius testimonio ferri sententiam.

It is from this more sublime group of *daemones* Plato asserts that witnesses and guardians are assigned to individuals in the conduct of their lives, always present, but never visible, as judges, not only of our every action, but also of our every thought. But when life is over and the soul must return from whence it came, he says that that same *daemon* who was given to us seizes hold of us and drags us off straightaway to trial, as if his prisoners, and there stands by in the judgement of our case, refutes any lies told and backs any truths; and it is directly on his testimony that the judgement is carried.

Why does Apuleius have Plato return here after such an extended discussion without his authorising voice? The answer lies in the immediately following section, which reiterates the radical impersonation that we have been listening to (*Soc.* 16.155):

proinde uos omnes, qui hanc Platonis diuinam sententiam me interprete auscultatis, ita animos uestros ad quaecumque agenda uel meditanda formate, ut sciatis nihil homini prae istis custodibus nec intra animum nec foris esse secreti.

Hence all of you, who heed this divine opinion of Plato via myself as interpreter, shape your souls in each and every action or thought, in such a way that you know that no one can keep a secret from these guardians, whether inside or outside of the soul.

Apuleius puns on Plato's 'opinion' (*sententia*) to make his point about the role of *daemones* and their 'judgement' (*sententia*). Furthermore, this is the same *sententia* that we were hearing through Apuleius' mediating voice when the very topic of *daemones* was introduced. Apuleius' evocation of that moment here has a powerful effect and there is even the fantastic possibility that in this entire section – from the introduction of the theory of *daemones* via their attributes, natures and embodied and disembodied forms – it has been Plato 'speaking' throughout. Apuleius may supplement his *sententia* with Roman colour in the form of *exempla*, poetic quotation and religious practices, but it remains Plato's 'judgment'. This is, however, the end of Plato's explicit methodological role in the lecture. He appears just twice more: when we learn about the tale of Socrates not crossing the River Ilissus in the *Phaedrus* (*Soc.* 19.163) and as exemplary of the philosopher sandwiched between Socrates and Pythagoras in the concluding protreptic (*Soc.* 22.169). So the end of Apuleius' impersonation of Plato, as well as its introduction, emphasises his own role as *interpres*. His mediation of Plato's *sententia* about *daemones* parallels the mediation of the *daemones* themselves, while the *sententia* of the disembodied *daemones* in judging the souls of mankind is evoked in the very same *sententia* of Plato. Nonetheless, we need to retrace our steps yet again to appreciate the full force of Apuleius' impersonation of Plato in *De deo Socratis* and to return to how Socrates is introduced in the speech and instigates a competing version of Apuleius' role as *interpres*. Apuleius is not merely the daemonic mediator of Plato's theories, he is also the enabler of his audience's radical transformation into the life of philosophy through the exemplary figure of Socrates.

Exemplary Socrates and philosophical protreptic

The synergy between Apuleius' character of *interpres* and Plato's 'heavenly' wisdom and judgement shows a direct correspondence between methodology and the subject matter of

daemonic interpretation. But there is another piece to the puzzle: Socrates. How does Apuleius' mediation of Platonic *sententia* make a place for Socrates? The answer to this question depends on seeing how Apuleius makes use of Plato in his discussion of Socrates as opposed to his discussion of *daemones* in general.

As we have seen, towards the end of the lecture, Apuleius turns to himself and his audience to ask them 'why we are not also encouraged by the example and remembrance of Socrates' (*quin potius nos quoque Socratis exemplo et commemoratione erigimur*, Soc. 21.167). This question acts as a hinge between the lecture so far, which has showcased the exemplary figure of Socrates and his *daimonion*, by offering a 'remembrance' (*commemoratio*) of his life as well as a discussion of his philosophy and his divine powers.⁹⁴ At the same time, it drums a forceful protreptic to pursue the philosophical life into his audience.⁹⁵ The direct protreptic force of Socrates' *exemplum* in *De Deo Socratis* is far more forceful than the implicit protreptic in the biographical exegesis attached to the Platonic biography of *De Platone*. Even the way in which protreptic obliquely enters the dogmatic body of *De Platone* in the second, ethical book cannot bear comparison with the outspoken protreptic of this pivotal passage of *De deo Socratis*. Nevertheless, the comparison with *De Platone* is still valid in that what sets up this direct protreptic conclusion is the union of Socratic *exemplum* with

⁹⁴ On *commemoratio* as 'personal recollections of sayings and actions', see Kindstrand (1986) 222 and Keulen (2009a) 37–9, who both refer to the definition of a *chreialusus* as *commemoratio* in Priscian *Praeexercitamina* 8 (Keil III p. 431–2). Compare the use of the verb *commemorare* in the exegetical modes of both Apuleius' Plato (*commemoratio*) Pl. 1.5.191 and Apuleius himself (*commemoravi*) Soc. 13.148.

⁹⁵ On the relationship between diatribe and protreptic in this passage, see Beaujeu (1973) 244. On these 'genres', see Slings (1999) 60–1. The odd mixture here seems to be based on the speaker being included in his exhortation to turn to (Socratic) philosophy. This inclusiveness makes the diatribe a self-accusation. This self-accusation also undermines the general currency of protreptic as a 'philosophical discourse' which 'includes all texts written by philosophers or inspired by philosophy which aim at a change of conduct in the readers or characters of these texts (usually in the field of ethics)' (Slings (1999) 60). Apuleius proceeds by failing to answer his own question, *de quo quidem nescio qua ratione detrahimur* (Soc. 21.168). Trzaskoma (2003) highlights Apuleius' double role in *De deo Socratis* as both speaking to the audience as 'philosopher' and human *interpres* of the heavenly Platonic account of *daemones*.

Platonic *sententia*. But, importantly, the Platonic biography of *De Platone* is replaced in *De deo Socratis* by the *exemplum* of Socrates.

The *exemplum* of Socrates first appears amid the general classification of *daemones* (Soc. 14.150):

quae omnia pro cuiusque more loci sollemnia et rata sunt, ut plerumque somniis et uaticinationibus et oraculis comperimus saepenumero indignata numina, si quid in sacris socordia uel superbia neglegatur. cuius generis mihi exempla adfatim suppetunt, sed adeo celebrata et frequentata sunt ut nemo ea commemorare adortus sit, quin multo plura omiserit quam recensuerit. idcirco supersedebo impraesentiarum in his rebus orationem occupare, quae si non apud omnis certam fidem, at certe penes cunctos notitiam promiscuam possident. id potius praestiterit Latine dissertare uarias species daemonum philosophis perhiberi, quo liquidius et plenius de praesagio Socratis deque eius amico numine cognoscatis.

All of these things are formalised and fixed according to the custom of each place, just as we discover, generally through dreams, prophecies and oracles, that divine powers are repeatedly indignant, if some aspect of their rites is neglected through inactivity or arrogance. There is an ample supply of examples of this sort of thing available to me, but they are so common and widespread that no one would start referencing them without omitting more than he could enumerate. Given this, I shall, for the moment, keep from filling my speech with these things, which even though they do not enjoy complete acceptance by all, are at least commonly known to all. It would be better to explicate in Latin that philosophers name various species of *daemones*, so that you may learn more clearly and fully about the ‘presentiment’ of Socrates and about his accompanying divinity.

The transition to the specific *exemplum* of Socrates is enacted by Apuleius to resist discussing and failing to do justice to ‘referencing’ (*commemorare*) the numerous *exempla* of rituals and cults available to him as exemplary for the power of *daemones*. Thus Apuleius chooses the singular ‘sign’ (*numen*) of Socrates rather than the various ‘divine powers’ (*numina*) who could become ‘offended’ (*indignata*) if overlooked.

The reference to discoursing in Latin has been read in various ways, including as a reference to a lost earlier Greek part of the speech.⁹⁶ Another rationale is that the two choices – of Socrates and of discoursing in Latin – are somehow related. As

⁹⁶ Harrison (2000) 141–4.

we have seen, translation is a way in which Apuleius explains his intermediary position as *interpres* of Plato. The way in which *De deo Socratis* establishes itself as a specifically Latinising lecture is clear from several passages.⁹⁷ Just as Apuleius has to articulate his discussion of the unique *exemplum* of Socrates' *daimonion* with terms ranging from *praesagium*, *daemon*, *numen* to *deus*, the race of *daemones* also causes problems for translation into Latin.⁹⁸ Immediately after the reference to Socrates, Apuleius first discusses types of *daemones* who exist in the air and, second, embodied *daemones* as human souls and *daemones* who were once embodied. In both of these discussions the question of translation is significant. In the first of these, Apuleius explains how the human *animus* becomes a form of *daemon* when perfected in virtue (*Soc.* 15.150–1):

nam quodam significatu et animus humanus etiam nunc in corpore situs daemon nuncupatur:

diine hunc ardorem mentibus addunt,
Euryale, an sua cuique deus fit dira cupido?

igitur et bona cupido animi bonus deus est. unde nonnulli arbitrantur, ut iam prius dictum est, εὐδαίμονας dici beatos, quorum daemon bonus id est animus uirtute perfectus est. eum nostra lingua, ut ego interpretor, haud sciam an bono, certe quidem meo periculo poteris Genium uocare, quod is deus, qui est animus sui cuique, quamquam sit immortalis, tamen quodam modo cum homine gignitur, ut eae preces, quibus Genium et genua precantur, coniunctionem nostram nexumque uideantur mihi obtestari, corpus atque animum duobus nominibus comprehendentes, quorum communio et copulatio sumus.

For in a certain sense the human soul, even while still located in the body, also gets called a *daemon*:

'is it the gods who add the passion to our minds,
Euryalus, or does each man's own dreaded desire
become his god?'

⁹⁷ *Soc.* 14.150, on the need to discourse in Latin, and *Soc.* 11.145, for the impromptu translation of a line of Homer.

⁹⁸ For an intriguing reading of the political implications of the term *numen* in Apuleius, see Sánchez-Ostiz (2003).

Accordingly, the good desire of the mind too is a good god. There are some people who think, as I have said before, that it is from this that happy men are called *eudaimones*, since they have a good daemon, i.e. a soul perfected in virtue. In our language (as I render it anyway, if not as a good bet, at least at my own risk), you'll be able to call the *daemon* a 'Genius', since that god, which is each person's soul, is, though immortal, nevertheless somehow born together with the human being, so that those prayers in which mortals call upon their Genius and their knees seem to me to testify to this connection and bond of ours, since they embrace under two names body and soul, of which we are a fusion and pairing.

This passage states that the 'human soul' (*animus humanus*) can be called a *daemon* in spite of its location in the body. Quoting Virgil (*Aeneid* 9.184–5), Apuleius moves to pronounce the 'good desire of the mind a good god' (*bona cupido animi bonus deus est*). Now this could be phrased as, 'good desire is a good god of the mind'⁹⁹ and the ambiguity is fitting given that the passage of the *Aeneid* that is quoted carries its own complex ambiguity.¹⁰⁰ But any ambiguity is resolved a few moments later, when Apuleius glosses the blessed, from the Greek εὐδαιμονας because they have a good *daemon* (*daemon bonus*), as a 'soul perfected by virtue' (*animus uirtute perfectus est*).¹⁰¹ There follows the implication that a 'good daemon' (*daemon bonus*) is the same thing as a 'soul perfected by virtue' (*animus uirtute perfectus*). Thus, the original rephrasing of Virgil – 'a good desire of the mind is a good god of the mind' (*bona cupido*

⁹⁹ The translations of this passage make the decisions for us. Harrison (2001) 207, 'the virtuous desire of the mind is also a good god', in which the 'also' is added. Trzaskoma (2002) 262, 'a beneficial desire of the soul is also a beneficial god'.

¹⁰⁰ See Fowler (2000) 96–7, who notes the Lucretian echoes of *dira cupido*, and also compares it to two Virgilian Underworld passages. See also Wardy (2008) for the Platonic implications of this passage.

¹⁰¹ The problematic phrase *ut iam prius dictum est* need not refer to a passage that we are missing which made explicit the translation of εὐδαιμονας with *beatos*. When previously discussing the gods (*Soc.* 3.123–4), Apuleius states that 'Plato thinks they reach the height of happiness by their perfect *ingenium*' (*quos deos Plato existimat... ingenio ad summam beatitudinem perfectos*). Yet, in spite of this earlier passage explicitly signalling Plato's association of *ingenium* with *beatitudo*, Apuleius is here vague about who the *nonnulli* are, especially as there is Platonic provenance for the etymology of εὐδαιμων in Plato (*Tim.* 90b) and, conjectured by Habermehl (1996) 124 n. 30, citing Xenocrates (fr. 81H). This also will be significant for the idea of perfection. A perfect *ingenium* is a *deus*, since 'no man is born absolutely good or bad, but his *ingenium* pertains to both'. *Pl.* 2. 20.247. The same opposition between *ingenium* and *beatitudo* is also made earlier at *Pl.* 2.4.127.

animi bonus deus est) becomes articulated as ‘a good daemon is a soul perfected by virtue’ (*daemon bonus animus uirtute perfectus est*).¹⁰²

The second type of *daemon* returns us to the world of shrines and rites, to those souls that become gods through divine qualities of prudence and justice, such as Osiris and Aesculapius. As we have already seen, to expound a further type of *daemon*, Apuleius transitions back to the theory expounded by Plato (*Soc.* 16.155) and the self-referential comment about his mediation of Plato’s *sententia* paralleling the *sententia* of these judging *daemones*. But what happens next, when the *exemplum* of Socrates is reintroduced, is a curious conflation of this later kind of Platonic guardian *daemon* with the earlier conception of the *daemon* as a human *animus* perfected by virtue in the figure of Socrates. Apuleius at first appears to be discussing the figure of the *daimonion* as a guardian *daemon*, but he consistently refers to Socrates as a man perfected by virtue. Apuleius’ discussion of how Socrates the sage followed and how he used his sign as a deterrent are both introduced with comparable depictions of Socrates (*Soc.* 17.157):

igitur mirum, si Socrates, uir adprime perfectus et Apollinis quoque testimonio sapiens, hunc deum suum cognouit et coluit, ac propterea eius custos – prope dicam Lar contubernio familiaris – cuncta et arcenda arcuit, praecauenda praecauit et praemonenda praemonuit, sicubi tamen interfectis sapientiae officiis non consilio sed praesagio indigebat, ut ubi dubitatione clauderet, ibi diuinatione consisteret?

So is it surprising if Socrates, a particularly perfect man, as well as a wise man by the testimony of Apollo, recognised and cultivated this god of his, and therefore his guardian – I could almost say his household Lar that lodged with him – offered protection, took precautions and forewarned when all the protections, precautions and forewarnings were needed, for all that, whensoever, with wisdom faltering on its duties, he required, not advice, but presentiment, so that he might rely on divination when tripped by doubt?

And once again before the idea of the sign as a deterrent (*Soc.* 19.163):

¹⁰² This move is part of the role of translation in the speech, on which see Fletcher (2009c).

The task of the translator

enim Socrates, utpote uir adprime perfectus, ex sese ad omnia congruentia sibi officia promptus, nullo adhortatore umquam indigebat . . .

For Socrates, being a particularly perfect man, and prepared from his own resources for all duties proper to him, never needed anyone to urge him on.

This re-emphasis of Socrates' perfection is finally returned to the issue of virtue, taking place at the very cusp of the protreptic (*Soc.* 20.167):

quod si cuius potest euenire facultas contemplandi diuinam effigiem, cur non adprime potuerit Socrati optingere, quem cuius amplissimo numini sapientiae dignitas coaequarat? nihil est enim deo similis et gratius quam uir animo perfecte bonus, qui hominibus ceteris antecellit, quam ipse a diis immortalibus distat.

And if anyone can have the capacity to contemplate a divine figure, why should it not have been able to occur particularly to Socrates, given that the majesty of his wisdom had made him equal to the greatest divine powers? For there is nothing more similar or more pleasing to god than a man perfectly good in his soul, who surpasses the majority of humankind by the same distance that separates him from the immortal gods.

Socrates' *daimonion*, while acting as a guardian *daemon*, is no more than the result of the perfection of his *animus* through virtue. In this way, Socrates can occupy the mediating role between gods and humans through his exemplary force. Furthermore, Socrates, like Apuleius, mediates the divine voice of Plato in the exegesis. When we finally reach the protreptic, it is not Plato's words that are emphasised but *Socrates' example*. Indeed the final mention of Plato in our account of Socrates leaves him as a mere source for a story about Socrates not crossing the river Ilissus in the *Phaedrus* (*Soc.* 19.163–4). Thus, while in both the account of *daemones* and the *daemon* of Socrates, Apuleius cites Plato in general and the specific, classic discussions of the phenomena, in the case of the *Phaedrus*, Socrates has taken centre stage in the lecture. This highlighting of Socrates works as a transition into the protreptic where his cultivation of his own *daemon* with virtue is the sole purpose for philosophy.

The tension between the protreptic ending of *De deo Socratis* and the rest of the oration has been marked as one of the major

differences between Apuleius' treatment and the accounts of Plutarch and Maximus.¹⁰³ However, the tension between expounding Platonic demonology and recounting the *exemplum* of Socrates' *daemon* on the one hand and the protreptic that ends the speech on the other is acknowledged by Apuleius at a very early stage in the speech. After an aborted attempt to describe the ineffable Platonic *deus*, Apuleius states that he will call his speech down from heaven to earth and discuss humankind (*Soc.* 3.125–6). The reference to 'calling the speech down from heaven to earth' is taken from Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*, where Socrates is described as the first to call philosophy down from heaven and place it in the towns (*primus philosophiam deuocauit a caelo et in urbibus conlocauit*, 5.10).¹⁰⁴ As if responding directly to this Ciceronian presence, Apuleius proceeds to upbraid the majority of humans for their animalistic qualities. Acknowledging this change of modes, the speaker corrects himself by clarifying that 'we are discoursing not in a dispute on errors, but about the distribution of nature' (*sed nunc non de errorum disputatione, sed de naturae distributione disserimus*, *Soc.* 3.126).¹⁰⁵ In spite of this *recusatio*, Apuleius proceeds to return to the diatribe mode when simply attempting to state that 'men inhabit the earth' (*homines . . . terras incolunt*); there are no fewer than twenty-one qualifying statements about those men.¹⁰⁶ These qualifiers articulate the basic oppositions within the human, of body and soul, of *ratio* and *oratio* in combination.¹⁰⁷ Then they move back to the diatribe mode,

¹⁰³ Harrison (2000) 165–6. The main Latin models of this mode are Seneca's moralising *Epistles* and *Dialogi*. Several references have been noted, Beaujeu (1973) 244–5, *De Vita Beata* 1.1; *Ep.* 80.2, 9; 84.11; Harrison (2000) 166: *Ep.* 71.6 (*erige*). We can also compare how protreptic for Seneca leads from Socrates as *sapiens*, on which see Inwood (2005) 295. As for the role of protreptic at the end, compare *Ep.* 89 in which Seneca marks the turn from exegesis to protreptic. On protreptic endings in general, see Elsom (1984) 93, who compares Dio's *On exile* as well as the 'diatribes' at the ends of books 3 and 4 of Lucretius.

¹⁰⁴ Harrison (2000) 148 n. 44 compares the opening of *Tusc.* 5 with that of *Mu.*

¹⁰⁵ The word play between *disputatio* and *distributio* serves to conflate the two. The term *disputatio* used of what Apuleius *says* he is not doing has significant repercussions for the manuscript distinction between the prologue (*praefatio*) and the *disputatio de deo Socratis*. Note that Augustine calls it a *disputatio* (*De Civ.* 8.14).

¹⁰⁶ See Harrison (2000) 149 for a discussion of the rhetorical techniques used in this passage.

¹⁰⁷ See Harrison (2000) 149 n. 45.

deploying characteristic oppositions like ‘dissimilar in morals, similar in errors, of unswayable audacity, of undiscouragable hope’ (*dissimilis moribus, similibus erroribus, peruicaci audacia, pertinaci spe*, *Soc.* 4.126).

The barrage of insults at humankind supplies one of the reasons why the earlier imagined interlocutor attacks the Platonic conception of the lack of mingling between gods and men. If humans are this worthless, how can you separate virtue from vice anyway? (*Soc.* 5.130):

nullus, inquis, deus humanis rebus interuenit: cui igitur preces allegabo? cui uotum nuncupabo? cui uictimam caedam? quem miseris auxiliatorem, quem fautorem bonis, quem aduersatorem malis in omni uita ciebo?

You say that no god intervenes in human affairs: well then, to whom shall I assign my prayers? To whom shall I pledge my vows? To whom shall I sacrifice a victim? Whom shall I invoke throughout my life as helper to the wretched, as supporter to the good, as enemy to the evil?

Apuleius’ Plato answers that *daemones* operate as go-betweens for gods and men. This revelation brings an end to the diatribe mode, as exegesis of Platonic and general demonology takes precedence. However, upon the conclusion of the *exemplum* of Socrates, the attacks against humankind return, but this time in the form of encouraging his audience to follow the teaching of Plato and the example of Socrates to turn to philosophy. So, this is not a detachable protreptic conclusion, but one tied into earlier parts of the speech in which the wretchedness of humans in relation to the divine was discussed.

The conclusion of the speech opens (*Soc.* 21.168–9) with a sense of amazement, which we saw at work in the account of Socrates’ *daimonion*. The speaker admits he is ‘amazed’ (*miror*) that although everyone ‘desires to live well’ (*cupiant optime uiuere*) and they know that the best source of life is to cultivate the soul, ‘they, nevertheless, do not cultivate their own soul’ (*tamen animum suum non colant*). After a series of analogies, comparing the cultivation of the eyes for sight, feet for running, arms for boxing, the speaker is amazed that ‘men do not cultivate their own soul through reason’ (*cur non etiam animum suum ratione excolant*, *Soc.* 21.169). Then he

continues by insisting that, unlike painting or harp-playing, the ‘reasoned practice of living’ (*ratio uiuendi*) is necessary for all and argues that you would never hear anyone say ‘I do not know how to live well, as Socrates, as Plato, as Pythagoras lived, nor does it shame me not to know how to live well.’ (*‘nescio bene uiuere, ut Socrates, ut Plato, ut Pythagoras uixerunt, nec pudet me nescire bene uiuere’*, *Soc.* 22.169–70). Finally, again in amazement (*mirandum est*), the speaker addresses an imagined person who says this and wonders why more is spent on useless things than on themselves. We then reach the conflation of demonology and ethics in the image of the cultivation of the *daemon* as an oath of allegiance to philosophy (*Soc.* 22.170):

igitur cotidiana eorum aera dispungas: inuenias in rationibus multa prodige profusa et in semet nihil, in sui dico daemonis cultum, qui cultus non aliud quam philosophiae sacramentum est.

So, you may check off items of their daily expenditure: you will find in their accounts much money spent lavishly but nothing spent on themselves, I mean, on the cultivation of their *daemon*, a cultivation which is no less than an oath of allegiance to philosophy.

This protreptic daemonic cultivation as ‘oath of allegiance’ to philosophy has come back full circle to the opening diatribes, since, just as the wretchedness of humans is expressed as separation from the divine, so the lack of virtue is the lack of cultivation of the *daemon*. So, as the race of *daemones* mediate between gods and men, the cultivation of the inner *daemon* as a *sacramentum* to philosophy mediates between virtue and vice.¹⁰⁸

But the question remains: what are the implications of assigning Socrates the role of *exemplum*, as used within an *oratio*, and Plato as a speaker of *sententiae*, as if performing an *oratio*? The most obvious way to account for these roles is to

¹⁰⁸ Harrison (2000) 168 on the religious implications of *sacramentum*. It is also used in legal, military and other circumstances. *Met.* 3.3 has Lucius’ obsequious *accusator* in the Risus trial refer to the ‘awesome jurisdiction of your court’ (*grauissimum iudicii uestri sacramentum*). Military: (duty, soldier’s oath) at *Met.* 4.11, 4.14, 4.21, 9.41. *Met.* 11.15 has the idea of religious initiation (although via a military metaphor). Bond between animals: *Met.* 3.26.

read *De deo Socratis* as ‘the clearest example in the Apuleian corpus of the complete fusion of oratory and philosophy.’¹⁰⁹ As we have seen, this fusion is one in which Apuleius sees Plato as the major exponent in his union of *ratio* with *oratio* in the image of the body of philosophy in *De Platone*. Plato’s success story was the creation of a rhetorical philosophy that perfected the *impolitas sententias* of his predecessors. This perfecting role, in the context of *De deo Socratis*, is developed into the figure of Plato as speaker of a heavenly *sententia*. For the lecturing philosopher Apuleius, acting as intermediary for the Platonic *sententia*, he too is appropriating the mode of rhetorical philosophy.

And yet within this Platonic formulation of rhetorical philosophy, the *exemplum* of Socrates poses a problem, especially in the final section of the lecture. In addition, with the concluding protreptic diatribe, the negotiation of the Socrates/Plato dynamic appears to have been lost, and Apuleius speaks of the singular figure of the philosopher through Socrates. This can be seen in the way in which the *exemplum* and *commemoratio* of Socrates becomes generalised into the philosophical life: no one would dare say that they do not want to live as Socrates, Plato or Pythagoras lived ... (*Soc.* 22.169–70). In spite of this generalisation, the concluding protreptic diatribe has been seen as specifically giving voice to Socrates, through the standard attack on extraneous wealth and inherited nobility. However, within these closing sections, Socrates becomes the *object* of praise rather than the teacher-figure. When Apuleius repeatedly refers to him as *meus Socrates*, it is in order to praise him for his innate qualities, and not to appropriate any Socratic speaking-*persona* in denouncing extraneous features. Apuleius claims that we should look at the rich just like horses when we buy them – for their innate qualities and not for their add-ons (e.g. saddle, bridle). He then extends the analogy to humans more generally as follows (*Soc.* 23.174):

similiter igitur et in hominibus contemplandis noli illa aliena aestimare, sed ipsum hominem penitus considera, ipsum ut meum Socratem pauperem

¹⁰⁹ Sandy (1997) 191.

Universal reading and daemonic interpretation

specta. aliena autem uoco, quae parentes pepererunt et quae fortuna largita est. quorum nihil laudibus Socratis mei admisceo, nullam generositatem, nullam prosapiam, nullos longos natales, nullas inuidiosas diuitias.

In the same way, therefore, in examining human beings, do not value those extraneous features, but look deep within at the person themselves; look to yourself as you would my Socrates, a pauper. Indeed I call extraneous features those things that are provided by one's parents and bestowed by fortune; I involve none of these in the praises of my Socrates – no noble breeding, no lineage, no lengthy pedigree, no enviable wealth.

The implication in praising humans as you would praise Socrates is that while he was poor and had no extraneous wealth or inherited nobility, the praise of the wealthy and noble should not rest on these external qualities, just as the consideration of the worth of a horse should not be based on external coverings. Instead of praising someone as well born, rich, strong, swift and handsome, he should be commended as follows (*Soc.* 23.175):

‘at enim bonis artibus doctus et adprime est eruditus et, quantum licet homini, sapiens et boni consultus’: tandem aliquando ipsum uirum laudas. hoc enim nec a patre hereditarium est nec a casu pendulum nec a suffragio anniculum nec a corpore caducum nec ab aetate mutabile. haec omnia meus Socrates habuit et ideo cetera habere contempsit.¹¹⁰

‘But he is skilled in the good arts and is particularly learned, and, as much as a man can be, he is wise and well-versed in the good’: finally you are praising the man himself! For this is not inherited from his father, nor hanging on chance; nor for one year by ballot, nor perishable with the body, nor changeable with age. All these qualities my Socrates had and on account of them he disdained to possess others.

This final phrase, in which Socrates is said to have had these inner qualities of education, learnedness, wisdom and expertise in the Good, is set against his poverty in the previously listed external qualities. Apuleius calls for us not only to examine ourselves as we would Socrates, as someone stripped of wealth and nobility, but to examine and praise others in the same way. This is the twist. If Socrates is the perfect *object* of praise, in that his extraneous features translate directly into his internal qualities,

¹¹⁰ Beaujeu (1973) 246–7 relates these categories with the *topoi* of diatribe.

then the perfect *mode* of praise itself is to treat its object after this model. Here we have the distinction between the *exemplum* and *commemoratio* of Socrates: the former as the model of object of praise, the latter as the mode of praise itself. Thus, Apuleius turns a speech in praise of Socrates into a discourse on the teaching of the best rhetorical mode of praise.¹¹¹

This separation can be seen in the concluding section of the speech.¹¹² In general, the account of Minerva as *sapientia* personified accompanying Ulysses' wanderings has been read as suitable for a work on the comparable culture hero Socrates.¹¹³ However, Ulysses is presented as a complex and contradictory figure throughout the corpus, making the comparison with Socrates' inner virtues problematic, as is the tension between their respective *auctores* Homer and Plato. Yet the parallel between Homer's Ulysses and Plato's Socrates has the effect of 'Platonising' Homer. Here the function of Homer, who teaches us about Ulysses (*in eodem Vlixē Homerus docet, Soc. 24.178*), is to echo the authorial role of Plato in praising Socrates. Yet, in the moment of the lecture when Apuleius' Plato seems most absent, the juxtaposition between the object of praise and the praising subject recalls the significance of writing a *commemoratio* of Plato. Apuleius' final flourish is to show how the philosopher must make Plato the *exemplum*, because while Socrates teaches us how to live, Plato teaches us about and relates Socrates' life. It is through this role that Plato transformed the Socratic life into a potent philosophical *sententia*, which Apuleius interprets for his audience.

¹¹¹ This move has an obvious Platonic precedent in the *Symposium*.

¹¹² Some have doubted whether the extant text is the intended conclusion of the speech, on which see Harrison (2000) 142–3. A supporting argument for this could be to compare the short contrasting clauses at *Soc. 24.178*, with the end of *Apol.* in which we have a succinct summing up of the charges (103.2), followed by a more pedestrian conclusion. But I fail to see how this would work for *Soc.*, since the proreptic conclusion makes the performance go out with a bang rather than end on a summarising statement. In reading the fifth part of the 'False Preface' as potentially meant for the beginning of *Soc.*, the focus on Odyssean wanderings could suit the travelling metaphors of the text's opening.

¹¹³ See Elsom (1984) and Münstermann (1995) 8–26, who both juxtapose Socrates and Odysseus as comparable cultural heroes throughout the Apuleian corpus.

This is what it means to claim that *De deo Socratis* follows *De Platone* in using biographical representation (Socrates and his *daemon*) to transform the exegesis of a philosophical doctrine (Platonic demonology) into a forceful protreptic. Direct use of Plato in the speech, which marks it off from the comparable works of Plutarch and Maximus, is Apuleius' guiding principle for the articulation of his philosophical message. Even when the Socratic *persona* appears to take centre stage, the complicating presence of Plato remains. This is not only on account of his mode of rhetorical philosophy or his exemplary presentation of Socrates, but also the complications and conflicts in *their* biographies that share and duplicate Apuleius' own situation as Platonist on trial (*Apologia*) and successful performing philosopher in Carthage (*Florida*). *De deo Socratis* is the most radical expression of his self-fashioning because Apuleius not only speaks for Plato's *sententia*, but also adopts the Platonic dramaturgic role of portraying the *persona* of Socrates the *sapiens* before his audience as the perfect *exemplum* of philosophy as a way of life.

CHAPTER 4

PLATONISM ON TRIAL AND PHILOSOPHY ON STAGE

(*Apologia* and *Florida*)

Apuleius' *Theatrum Philosophicum*

Early in the lecture *De deo Socratis*, Apuleius announces that he will 'call down his speech from heaven to earth' (*orationem de caelo in terram deuocabo*, *Soc.* 3.125).¹ While Apuleius employs this phrase to enact a transition from the topic of the supreme deity in a discussion of the tripartite nature of the Universe, Cicero used it to describe Socrates' philosophical mission.² The ethical force of Cicero's Socratic usage can be gleaned from how Apuleius proceeds with a harsh condemnation (*Soc.* 3.125–6) of the majority of the earth-dwelling human race for their 'neglect of true learning' (*incuria uerae disciplinae*), that has caused them to be 'depraved through all their errors' (*omnibus erroribus . . . deprauauerint*), 'imbued with crimes' (*sceleribus inbuerint*) and 'bestialised' (*effecerint*). Only after this tirade does Apuleius pull back and return to the task at hand (*Soc.* 3.126):

sed nunc non de errorum disputatione, sed de naturae distributione disserimus.

But now we are discoursing not in a dispute on errors, but about the distribution of nature.

In spite of this rejection (*recusatio*) of an ethical discussion amid the ostensible topic of a lecture on Platonic demonology, Apuleius cannot resist a final swipe at the *errores* of mankind in the following excessive parenthesis (*Soc.* 4.126–7):

¹ The title of this section is borrowed from Foucault (1977), but with the application of Gasché (2007) to *theoria* in general, and to the iconic 'scene' of Thales' fall in Plato's *Theaetetus* (which we will come to later) in particular.

² Cicero *Acad.* 1.15; *Tusc.* 5.10.

igitur homines ratione gaudentes, oratione pollentes, immortalibus animis, moribundis membris, leuibus et anxiiis mentibus, brutis et obnoxiiis corporibus, dissimilibus moribus, similibus erroribus, peruicaci audacia, pertinaci spe, casso labore, fortuna caduca, singillatim mortales, cunctim tamen universo genere perpetui, uicissim sufficiens prole mutabiles, uolucris tempore, tarda sapientia, cita morte, querula uita, terras incolunt.

So humans – delighting in reason, predominant in speech, with immortal souls, mortal limbs; with nimble and cautious minds, brutish and vulnerable bodies; dissimilar in morals, similar in errors; insistent in audacity, unremitting in hope; labouring in vain, fragile in fortune; individually mortal, yet collectively everlasting when taken as a species, turn-by-turn changeable through replenishing offspring; their time is short, their wisdom tardy; their death swift, their life one of discontent – it is humans who inhabit the earth.

Apuleius' parenthesis, full of rhyme and balanced paired phrases (or 'asyndetic contrasting pairs'), forcefully supplements the claim of his *recusatio* that man's very nature is conflicted between contrary attributes.³ As we saw in the discussion of the lecture in the previous chapter, Apuleius will return to address his audience and mankind in general at the end of his work by exhorting them to cultivate their inner *daemon* and swear the oath of allegiance to follow the life of philosophy as man's way out of their earthly wretchedness.

But the *recusatio* and parenthesis do more than set up the protreptic conclusion of *De deo Socratis*; they gesture towards the discussion of the errors of mankind as an alternative theme to the present topic. This topic is explicitly addressed in the survey of Platonic ethics in *De Platone* Book 2. We may recall such passages as the discussion of the vices in the soul (*Pl.* 2.4.225–6) with the fight of *prudentia* against *indocilitas* because the latter is 'adverse to the discipline of learning' (*contraria est disciplinae discendi*) or remember that fallen Beholder of Virtue (*spectator uirtutis*) in *De Platone* (2.11.236), 'deceived by error' (*deceptus errore*). Furthermore, at the same time as emphasising the necessarily rhetorical and impassioned nature of any exploration of such an ethical theme, Apuleius also highlights the rhetorical genre and performative contexts of the present lecture. Just as the excessive parenthesis expands the discussion

³ Harrison (2000) 149.

of the errors of mankind, explicitly suppressed by the *recusatio*, the rhetorical force of this passage extends to the theme discussed: the depiction of men as 'delighting in reason, predominant in speech' (*ratione gaudentes, oratione pollentes*). Harrison notes: '[t]he phrase *oratione pollentes* is introduced partly for the jingle with *ratione*, but also appropriately stresses the human power of speech in the context of a performance by a professional human speaker'.⁴ While Harrison's interpretation separates form (the – imperfect – jingle) from content (the human power of speech) and context (the performance by a professional human speaker), Apuleius makes it clear that such compartmentalisation is impossible by enacting his (performative) context through the style of his (performative) utterance as much as by the utterance itself. We encountered a different manifestation of this performativity in the way that the image of the body of philosophy in the biography of *De Platone*, being filed down by *ratio* and dressed up by *oratio*, at the same time marked the formation of Plato as biographical subject and acted as the guiding role of the biographical exegesis in the work to come. Still more important for the performative context of the lecture, the image is also employed in the two so-called 'rhetorical' works of the corpus: *Apologia* and *Florida*.

In his *Apologia*, the defence-speech against accusations of magic (supposedly?) delivered in 158/9 CE, Apuleius opens by countering some minor charges against his character, such as his presumed beauty and eloquence.⁵ The end-point of this line of argument is what Apuleius dubs 'that long and censorious speech about the mirror' (*de speculo longa illa et censoria oratio*, *Apol.* 13.5). Apuleius reflects on how the prosecution see a problem with a philosopher owning a mirror, since it intimates a seemingly excessive concern for one's appearance. Apuleius defends himself in numerous ways, including pointing out that Socrates 'the wisest man of all' (*uir omnium sapientissimus*, *Apol.* 15.6) used a mirror – and urged his pupils to do so too. To support his adherence to the example of Socrates,

⁴ Harrison (2000) 149.

⁵ On *Apol.* in general, see Sandy (1997) 131–48; Harrison (2000) 39–88 and Binter-nagel (2008), as well as selected essays in Riess (2008a) and Bradley (2012).

Apuleius borrows another example, this time from oratory. First he references how Demosthenes, 'first among the artists of speaking' (*primarium dicendi artificem*, *Apol.* 15.8), rehearsed his speeches before a mirror 'as if before a teacher' (*quasi ante magistrum*). Apuleius immediately glosses this idea of the pedagogic role of the mirror with the biographical tradition surrounding Demosthenes' intellectual masters (*Apol.* 15.9):

ita ille summus orator cum a Platone philosopho facundiam hausisset, ab Ebulide dialectico argumentationes edidicisset, nouissimam pronuntiandi congruentiam ab speculo petiuit.

In this way, the man who was the best orator, after he had imbibed eloquence from Plato the philosopher, and learned argumentations from Ebulides the dialectician, sought the finishing-touches of pronunciation from a mirror.

Yet having painted such a portrait of the orator and his magisterial mirror, Apuleius proceeds to undermine the profession of oratory in an unfavourable comparison with the philosopher (*Apol.* 15.10):

utrum igitur putas maiorem curam decoris in adseueranda oratione suscipiendam rhetori iurganti an philosopho obiurganti, apud iudices sorte ductos paulisper disceptanti an apud omnis homines semper disserenti, de finibus agrorum litiganti an de finibus bonorum et malorum docenti?

So then, who do you think ought to have more concern for dignity when using speech – the rhetor who verbally assaults, or the philosopher who abusively insults the one who disputes briefly before random jurors, or the one who always discourses before all of mankind, the one who litigates on the limits of fields or the one who instructs on the limits of good and evil?

The path that has led from Socrates' morality to Plato's eloquence proceeds via jingling juxtapositions (*iurganti* ~ *obiurganti*; *disputanti* ~ *disserenti*) and culminates in the punch-line punning on the title of Cicero's work, *De finibus bonorum et malorum*. Indeed the very question about the 'concern for dignity' (*curam decoris*), like the reference to the *errores* of mankind, chimes with the depiction of the fallen *spectator uirtutis* in *De Platone* who gives himself over to vices even though he is 'not ignorant of how much of disgrace and disadvantage he obtains from sharing in vices' (*non ignarus*

quantum dedecoris atque incommodi adipiscatur ex participatione uitiorum, *Pl.* 2.11.237). Furthermore, the juxtaposition of 'dignity' (*decor*) and 'speech' (*oratio*) brings us back to the image in *De Platone*, and the filing down with *ratio* and dressing up with *oratio*, and of the description of mankind in *De deo Socratis*.⁶ As we saw with that image and its variations, the impersonation of philosophy relies on no simplistic separation of form and content of philosophical discourse, but a simultaneous speciousness. Therefore, read in relation to this passage in the *Apologia*, we can understand the depiction of humans in *De deo Socratis* as not only *ratione gaudentes, oratione polentes* but also split between a mind and a body, their immortal soul and their mortal limbs. In fact, Apuleius proceeds to prove his point by transforming the accusation of the mirror into a complex philosophical discussion of optics.⁷ Yet, as in *De deo Socratis*, the fact that such claims are made within the context of a rhetorical speech should add to, rather than detract from, their pointedness. In both *Apologia* and *Florida*, Apuleius' role as philosopher-speaker is confirmed by his separation from the activities of his prosecutors in the former and affiliation with his audience in the latter. By adopting this manner of defence in his speech, Apuleius states that he is 'justifying philosophy before the ignorant and proving myself' (*purgandae apud imperitos philosophiae et probandi mei*, *Apol.* 1.3). Besides, the flip side of this is that by expressing his own situation as a philosopher on trial, Apuleius can build the best possible defence of philosophy from his own situation.

This same performative gesture is made in several places in Apuleius' other 'rhetorical' work, the *Florida*: a collation of excerpts from epideictic orations delivered by Apuleius at the theatre in Carthage in the 160s CE. In one brief decontextualised excerpt, Apuleius differentiates the 'speech' (*oratio*) of philosophy from 'bird-song' (*cantus*) (*Fl.* 13.1):

⁶ For the Ciceronian complexities of *decus* and *decor*, see Gunderson (2000) 192.

⁷ On the Apuleius passage as testimonium for Archytas' theory of optics, see Burnyeat (2005).

non enim mihi philosophia id genus orationem largita est, ut natura quibusdam aibus brevem et temporarium cantum commodauit.

For philosophy has not bestowed upon me the type of speech like that which nature has lent to certain birds: the brief and time-specific song.

After listing several species of bird and the time of day that they sing at, Apuleius concludes (*Fl.* 13.3):

sed enim philosophi ratio et oratio tempore iugis est et auditu uenerabilis et intellectu utilis et modo omnica.

But the reason and speech of the philosopher is continuous and honourable to hear, beneficial to understand, and panphonic in mode.

This passage shows that the best parts of humankind – their reason and speech – are not only what separate them from the birds, but are also the defining attributes of the philosopher.⁸ This claim conflates the description of the power of speech and reason in mankind in *De deo Socratis* with the separation of the orator and the philosopher in the *Apologia*. Here we see the two processes employed in Plato's perfection of philosophy and divided between the philosopher-speaker and his audience, both united in the voice of the philosopher. But in the glossing of these terms, we can still see each part at work and the division between speaker and audience at play. While *ratio* is glossed by 'continuity in time' (*tempore iugis*), it is *oratio* that is 'venerable to hear' (*auditu uenerabilis*); and while *ratio* is 'useful to understand', it is explicitly *oratio* that is 'panphonic in mode' (*modo omnica*). Within this glossing, the audience shares in both the timeless and panphonic that familiar synergy between *ratio* and *oratio* when they 'listen' and 'understand' what is *uenerabilis* and *utile*.⁹

This balancing between philosophical discourse and its reception is made more explicit in another brief excerpt, presumably from near the opening of a speech, in which Apuleius grounds the *oratio* of the philosopher in the expectations of the audience in the Carthaginian theatre (*Fl.* 5):

⁸ For the *ratio/oratio* synergy in *Fl.* in general, see Bajoni (1989) 256–7; Messina (1999) 299–301. Hijmans (1994) 1744–8, links *ratio et oratio* to Platonic *facundia*.

⁹ Lee (2005) 130. For the Horatian dynamic between *utile* and *dulce* in the *Met.* Prologue, see Graverini (2007) 23–8.

bono enim studio in theatrum conuenistis, ut qui sciatis non locum auctoritatem orationi derogare, sed cum primis hoc spectandum esse, quid in theatro deprehendas. nam si mimus est, riseris, si funerepus, timueris, si comoedia est, faueris, si philosophus, didiceris.

For you have gathered together in a theatre with good purpose because you know that the place's authority does not detract from the speech, but still this must be considered above all else: what you will find in the theatre. For if it is a mime, you will laugh; if it is a tight-rope walker, you will be nervous; if it is comedy, you will applaud, if it is a philosopher, you will learn.

While *Florida* 13 alternates between the type of *oratio* the philosopher speaks and its effect on the philosopher's audience, in this brief excerpt Apuleius emphasises the pivotal role of the philosopher's audience. The philosopher concludes the list of theatrical performers (*mimus, funerepus, comoedia, philosophus*) and the audience's response to them (laughter, nervousness, applause, or learning). Nonetheless, given Apuleius' own situation as the philosopher speaking, there is also a pedagogic force to the point he is making. While the phrase *bonum studium* refers to the motivation of the audience to attend the theatre in general, it also intimates that they are doing so to hear a philosopher. In addition, the nuance of *spectandum* literally enacts this philosophical transformation of the theatre audience from one that merely watches to one that considers what they are watching.

These points are made explicit in what seems to be a fleshed-out expansion of the lesson of this excerpt in one of the most extended and important speeches in the collection: *Florida* 18. At the opening of this speech, Apuleius argues that when a philosopher is speaking in the theatre, as is the case in the present speech in the theatre of Carthage, what ought to be looked at by his audience is not any of the scenery or any of the usual spectacles that one typically encounters there, but instead 'nothing ought to be considered more than the *ratio* of the gathered audience and the *oratio* of the speaker' (*nihil amplius spectari debet quam conuenientium ratio et dicentis oratio, Fl. 18.5*). On this occasion, Apuleius' use of *ratio* replaces the *bonum studium* of the audience in *Florida* 5 to double as the 'reason' of the audience, their motivation to actually attend a

philosopher's 'performance' – to hear his *oratio*, and also the projected impact of the philosopher's *oratio* on his audience – that they will learn. This is especially pertinent to the main topic under discussion in *Florida* 18, since the aim of the speech is for Apuleius to pay Carthage back for his rudimentary education there by giving them a philosophical lesson on what an appropriate payment (*merces*) would be. So, as with the *Apologia*, Apuleius directs the discussion of the synergy between *oratio* and *ratio* to a specific occasion (the present speech) and a particular facet of his autobiography (his education).

If we now take stock of the correspondences between the depiction of mankind in *De deo Socratis*, the distinction between the philosopher and the orator in the *Apologia* and the definition of philosophy in terms of audience in several *Florida* excerpts, we encounter a consistent recurrence of the dynamic between *ratio* and *oratio*: ethical force combined with explicit evocation of the performative contexts of Apuleius' statements. However, the grounding of this ethical focus in the autobiography of the speaker Apuleius and the singular performative context of the delivered speech marks a clear departure from both speaker and audience in *De deo Socratis*. Even though *De deo Socratis* utilised the dynamic of *oratio* in terms of defining mankind, it is completely devoid of any specified grounding of the speech in either the autobiography of the author or the specificity of the context. The *interpres* as exegete of *De deo Socratis* offers an authorial protreptic, which emphasises a Romanising transformation of Platonism, but this exegete is never explicitly identified with Apuleius and his staging of his performance before a specified audience. While I would argue that the generalisable situation of the philosopher on trial or speaking in a theatre should be seen as a methodological extension to the catascopic perspective of the exegete of *De mundo* and intermediary role of the *interpres* of *De deo Socratis*, the emphasis on autobiography in the *Apologia* and *Florida* maps more directly onto the biographical exegesis of *De Platone*. As we saw in my discussion of that work, Apuleius does not follow Alcinous' *Didaskalikos* in adopting a lecture-hall style

of presentation of Plato's doctrines, but instead grounds his methodology in a core biographical exegesis and then introduces other voices in supplementary methodologies of conceptual personification and authorial protreptic. In the *Apologia* and *Florida*, the pivotal role of Plato's biography is replaced by Apuleius the Platonist's own autobiography. The effect of Apuleius' autobiographically grounded methodology in the *Apologia* and *Florida* transforms the general performative context of *De deo Socratis* into a specific event. Yet, as we shall see, for this distinction to occur, we must appreciate the differences between the defence speech and the orations excerpted in the *Florida* collection. Indeed, the major difference between the *Apologia* and *Florida* speeches is one that we have already encountered *within De deo Socratis*. We saw how Plato's explicit role in the discussion of demonology changed into the exemplary role of Socrates as a segue into the concluding protreptic. The explicit role of Plato and the more general conception of philosophy in the two parts of *De deo Socratis* reappears in any comparison between the *Apologia* and *Florida*. In the former Apuleius defends himself as a specifically 'Platonic philosopher', offering a range of citation, exempla and exegesis of Platonic texts and ideas.¹⁰ But in the latter Apuleius presents himself in the much more general guise of the philosopher. However, once we recognise this basic distinction, we also begin to detect some slippage, as the Platonism in the *Apologia* expands into a general defence of philosophy and the philosophical posturing of the *Florida* is grounded in specifically Platonic concerns. Once again it is the shared context of the biography of Plato and the image of the body of philosophy in *De Platone* that returns in both works. But before offering my reading of each work, let me first consider how the 'rhetorical works' – the *Apologia* and *Florida* – can fit into a general context of 'rhetorical' Platonism in Apuleius' period,

¹⁰ For how this use of Plato fits into the the range of argument strategies of *Apol.*, Binternagel (2008).

and then explore how autobiography operates as a philosophical methodology in both texts. Thereafter I shall trace out how the specific performative contexts explain the crucial dynamic between Platonism and philosophy in these works.

Platonic oratory

Beyond commentaries, biographies and introductions, and treatises and lectures on Platonic themes, oratory is a more problematic genre of Platonic writing in the second and third centuries CE. While there is admittedly a fine line between a lecture like *De deo Socratis* and the orations of Maximus of Tyre and this genre of Platonic oratory, the basic distinction is that the latter are not as focused on expounding explicit Platonic themes (e.g. demonology) as reworking Platonic theories and imagery from the dialogues to make a more basic self-presentation of the philosopher as speaker. Within this context, Apuleius' *Florida* seems to fit well as an epideictic, display oration. Sandy saw the excerpts that make up the *Florida* collection as forming 'the strongest link between Apuleius's oratorical activities and those of the Greek-writing sophists of the Roman Empire'.¹¹ There are several generic and discursive affiliations between the fragments of the *Florida* collection and Apuleius' Greek contemporaries.¹² Menander Rhetor's account of types of epideictic oratory in *Peri Epideiktikon* befits several of the surviving excerpts and contemporary works, especially passages that focus on the setting and circumstances of composition and style.¹³ Several excerpts are parts of speeches in praise of a particular place and its traditions and in praise of a current civic location. These can be compared to several orations of Dio of Prusa. Other techniques are part of the *laliai* style, with especially embellished effect, and Lucian may be seen as a comparable figure for these.

¹¹ Sandy (1997) 150.

¹² The terms 'generic' and 'discursive' affiliations are borrowed from Lee (2005) 20–5 to demarcate the distinction between the epideictic genre and more general characteristics of Second Sophistic rhetorical practice.

¹³ For a summary of Menander's types as they apply to the *Florida*, see Lee (2005) 20–3.

Yet within the epideictic genre, the role of philosophy in general and of Platonism in particular is especially hard to pin down. Unlike *De deo Socratis* and the Platonic orations of Maximus of Tyre, the epideictic genre has a less focused use of philosophical themes and Platonic references.¹⁴ Rather than philosophy accounting for the epideictic genre, it was more likely to be seen as part of its armoury of erudition, embellishment and display. There are, however, cases of the epideictic genre being used for ostensibly philosophical aims. In these terms, the most significant figure of comparison is Dio of Prusa.¹⁵ His orations, like the *Florida*, present us with the philosopher holding forth before a crowd on a range of moralising topics.¹⁶ Dio's *Olympic Oration* (*Or.* 12) is especially significant since it shares with Apuleius' *Florida* 5 and 18 the topic of why a crowd should gather to hear a philosopher speak.¹⁷ Yet in spite of correspondences between their self-presentation as philosophers, the role of Platonism in Dio's *Orationes* and Apuleius' *Florida* is in no way comparable. Dio litters his speeches with Platonic allusions and references, while, in spite of the explicit Platonism displayed elsewhere in Apuleius' corpus and, as we shall see, in the *Apologia*, for the *Florida* collection it is subsumed under a general discussion of philosophy.¹⁸ The reason for this, I shall argue, is that the role of general philosophical speaker in the *Florida* is primarily mobilised to counteract the figure of the sophist in the intellectual climate of his day. Through the juxtaposition of his own case as philosopher-speaker and a series of exemplary philosophical anecdotes, Apuleius defines the philosopher as different from other public performers. The cumulative effect of these anecdotes forms a general portrait of the philosopher that balances eloquence with virtue. In doing so, Apuleius adheres, once again, to the biography of Plato in *De Platone*. This is

¹⁴ Fowler (2008) groups Lucian, Maximus of Tyre, Aelius Aristides and Apuleius together as examples of the 'Platonic rhetor'.

¹⁵ For a general discussion of Dio, see the essays in Swain (2000). For a comparison of Dio and Apuleius (in the *Fl.*), see La Rocca (2005) 35–7.

¹⁶ On Dio the philosopher, see Moles (1978).

¹⁷ On the comparison, see Sandy (1997) 154–5; Harrison (2000) 101.

¹⁸ On Dio and Plato, see Trapp (2000).

especially apparent in the extended narratives of the *Florida* (*Fl.* 9, 15, 16 and 18) in which Apuleius presents himself as the philosopher on stage to engage in a form of dialogue with his Carthaginian audience. In two of these orations (*Fl.* 9 and 18) it is the figure of the Classical Greek sophist (Hippias in *Fl.* 9 and Protagoras in *Fl.* 18) against whom Apuleius now defines his philosophical project, a strategy in tune with that of his philosophical master, Plato.

Unlike the speeches collected in the *Florida*, Apuleius' *Apologia*, as ostensibly a piece of forensic oratory, has no immediate parallels among sophistic contemporaries, although the traditions of Christian apologetic in both Greek and Latin do offer some parallels.¹⁹ Furthermore, an emphasis on the *Apologia* as a literary text rather than delivered speech has uncovered affinities with genres of miscellany in the period, especially with regard to how Apuleius and Gellius both fashion their intellectual identities in terms of the sheer breadth of their learning and literary output.²⁰ Yet, as in some of the extended speeches of the *Florida*, in the *Apologia* Apuleius manipulates the setting to ground his philosophical identity. The context of the trial gives Apuleius an opportunity to present a kaleidoscopic survey of his work as a Platonic philosopher and, by extension, to defend philosophy itself. He does so by not only citing examples of famous philosophers, but also by directly quoting Plato and performing impromptu exegeses of his theories. Through this gearing of the general portrait of the exemplary philosopher with the specific figure of the Platonist author, Apuleius also impersonates the central dynamic in Plato's biography between *ratio* and *oratio*, Socratic *labor* and Platonic *elegantia*. Furthermore, in triangulating his defence between his own position and the urbane philosopher-judge, Claudius Maximus, and the rustic, ignorant prosecutor, Aemilianus, Apuleius again develops this dynamic at the heart of his Platonism. Also, as we shall see, Apuleius extends his 'Platonising' in the speech beyond the

¹⁹ On the general absence of forensic oratory in the Second Sophistic, see Sandy (1997) 132. On the *Apol.* and Christian apologetic, see Harrison (2000) 43.

²⁰ See especially the work of Keulen: (2004) (2009a) 193–214; (2009b).

citation of Plato and his own Platonic works to become a central player in the 'family drama' that is behind the whole trial. Apuleius' self-defence as a Platonist is a background story to his role as a teacher in his family and community. In short, the *Apologia* transforms the situation of the philosopher on trial into a display speech on the range of the Platonic philosopher's attributes.

Autobiography as philosophy

It has not only been their generic affiliations to oratory that have meant that the *Apologia* and *Florida* have been for the most part read in isolation from Apuleius' core 'philosophical works'.²¹ The markedly autobiographical nature of both the *Apologia* and many excerpts found in the *Florida* collection has also contributed to this separation and, as expected, such division can be traced back to different types of reading of the *Metamorphoses* – the autobiographical and the philosophical.²² Yet, as we shall see, in both the *Apologia* and *Florida*, autobiographical statements are often not merely autobiographical, but are also expressions of Apuleius' philosophical principles.²³ If we recall how rhetorical expression and context cannot be separated from philosophical topic in *De deo Socratis*, the *Apologia* and *Florida* use autobiography to create a different philosophical methodology.²⁴ Furthermore, the

²¹ The exceptions include Regen (1971) who juxtaposes moments of Platonic exegesis in the *Apol.* with *Mu.* and followed by Hijmans (1987). O'Brien (2002) introduces her study of Apuleius' debt to Plato in the *Met.* with a discussion of philosophical discourse in theory in *Pl.* and in practice in both the *Apol.* and *Fl.*

²² See Winkler (1985), nn. 5 and 8.

²³ Gaisser (2008) 6 makes this point more generally: 'In both the *Florida* and *Apology* we see Apuleius as a man who likes to talk about himself but who does not do so carelessly or merely to impart autobiographical detail.'

²⁴ Here is the crux of the whole question of the 'False Preface'. For recent arguments for accepting the whole preface, see Hunink (1995) and Sandy (1997) 192–6, and for just the fifth section, Hijmans (1994) 1781–2, after Mras (1949). Regen (1999) 432–6 presents the arguments for and against accepting all of the preface or only the fifth section, concluding that none of it should be accepted, and be attributed to *Fl.*

autobiographical emphases of the *Apologia* and *Florida* and their singular contexts are crucial for delineating the genre of Platonic oratory, especially in terms of its distinction from the lecture on Platonic themes. While the orations of Maximus of Tyre and *De deo Socratis* are works of oratory, they, unlike many of the works of Dio, the *Apologia* and the *Florida*, do not specify an audience or flesh out the speaker as an autobiographical subject. This distinction separates the lecture on Platonic topics from a Platonic or philosophical oratory, while also the difference between the Platonism of the *Apologia* and general philosophising of the *Florida* and Dio. Therefore, autobiography informs generic categories of oratory as much as a methodology of philosophising. The best way to explore the autobiographical methodology of philosophising in the *Apologia* and *Florida*, while never losing sight of their differences, will be to focus on a shared autobiographical topic, such as Apuleius' discussions of his North African *patria* ('native land').

Early in the *Apologia*, Apuleius describes his *patria* as follows (*Apol.* 24.1–3):

de patria mea uero, quod eam sitam Numidiae et Gaetuliae in ipso confinio meis scriptis ostendistis, quibus memet professus sum, cum Lolliano Auito c. u. praesente publice dissererem, Seminuidam et Semigaetulum, non uideo quid mihi sit in ea re pudendum, haud minus quam Cyro maiori, quod genere mixto fuit Semimedes ac Semipersa. non enim ubi prognatus, sed ut moratus quisque sit spectandum, nec qua regione, sed qua ratione uitam uiuere inierit, considerandum est.

As to my native land, which you showed, based on my writings, lies on the very border between Numidia and Gaetulia, I described myself, when I was speaking openly in the presence of the distinguished Lollianus Avitus, as half Numidian and half Gaetulian, and I do not see that there is any cause of shame in that matter, any more than there was for Cyrus the Great for being of mixed descent, half Mede and half Persian. For it is not where someone was born, but how he is morally constituted, that ought to be considered; not in what region, but by what reasoning he entered into living his life.

After an example from agriculture, Apuleius proceeds to ground this basic ethical point in the Platonic theory of the immortality of the soul (*Apol.* 24.5):

enimvero animo hominis extrinsecus in hospitium corporis immigranti quid ex istis addi uel minui ad uirtutem uel malitiam potest?

But since the soul of a man travels from outside into the housing of the body, how could any of these [geographical] factors be able to increase or diminish its virtue or vice?

Apuleius raises an autobiographical fact to redirect it towards a general philosophical point about ethical character and motivation.²⁵ What should be looked at is a man 'as he is morally constituted' (*ut moratus*) and not 'where he is born' (*ubi prognatus*); his life's 'reason' (*ratio*) and not its 'region' (*regio*). Then this basic point is starred as specifically Platonic with the mention of the theory of the immortality of the 'soul' (*animus*). Here we can see how Apuleius not only uses a philosophical extension of an autobiographical detail, but also how he is 'defending philosophy as well as himself' (*purgandae... philosophiae et probandi mei*, *Apol.* 1.3). This approach is also employed, in changed performative circumstances, in one of the *Florida* excerpts. In *Florida* 18, Apuleius once again refers to his *patria*, but this time to juxtapose his childhood education in Carthage (where he is speaking) with his philosophical training in Athens (*Fl.* 18.15–16):

ita mihi et patria in concilio Africae, id est uestro, et pueritia apud uos et magistri uos et secta, licet Athenis Atticis confirmata, tamen hic incohata est, et uox mea utraque lingua iam uestris auribus ante proximum sexennium probe cognita, quin et libri mei non alia ubique laude carius censentur quam quod iudicio uestro comprobantur.²⁶

In the same way, my native land belongs to the council of Africa, that is to your council, and my boyhood was spent among you, you were my teachers and my philosophical training, even though it was strengthened in Attic Athens, nonetheless was here in outline, and my voice has been familiar to your ears for the last six years in both languages and my books, too, are nowhere esteemed higher than in your judgement.

²⁵ For a discussion of this passage in terms of Apuleius' Afro-Platonic identity, see Fletcher (2014).

²⁶ This passage has an ambiguous relationship to the prologue of the *Met.* 1.1, where the narrator says that he had 'no teacher' (*nullo magistro praeunte*) in Latin whereas here he invokes a plurality of teachers (*magistris*); on which see Lee (2005) 173. It is mostly read as biographical backdrop to the Prologue.

On a first reading this seems simplicity itself, a straight autobiographical point. Apuleius' *patria* is in the province of Africa, where he received his formative education and now is known for his bilingual speeches and books. Yet he also supplemented his youthful education with 'philosophical training' (*secta*) in the Athenian Academy. But, as we shall see in detail towards the end of this chapter, Apuleius makes the interplay between Africa and Athens, the two places of his education, into a philosophical point about the issue of how to repay the people of Carthage. The 'payment' (*merces*) he opts for is no sophistic financial recompense, but the gift, precisely, of acknowledging their formative role in creating the philosopher. In addition, it is no coincidence that Apuleius is once again re-articulating the Platonic biography of *De Platone* in his own philosophical trajectory, wherein the perfection of philosophy by Plato from the 'unpolished and unfinalised opinions' (*impolitae sententiae et inchoatae*) of previous thinkers is paralleled by the 'confirmation' (*confirmata*) of Apuleius' philosophical training in Athens, which was 'in formation' (*inchoata*) in Carthage.

Now, the fact that both of these autobiographical references to Apuleius' *patria* are used to make philosophical points could be dismissed as attempts to show Apuleius' general erudition – in the *Apologia*, to philosophise about a charge of the prosecution before the judge Claudius Maximus, whom we know to be philosophically minded; in the *Florida*, to flatter the intelligence of the Carthaginian audience, something that is made explicit by the very opening lines of the speech and the emphasis on Carthage as a place with 'many friends of learning' (*multos eruditionis amicos*, *Fl.* 18.1).²⁷ Nonetheless, if we look at the big picture for both the *Apologia* and *Florida* 18, there is a more important basis for this recourse to autobiography for philosophical ends.

In the *Apologia*, Apuleius concludes his discussion of his *patria* by targeting his prosecutor, Aemilianus (*Apol.* 24.10):

²⁷ On the 'learning' of Carthage, compare *Fl.* 20.9–10.

cur ergo illa protuli? ut mihi tu, Aemiliane, minus posthac suscenseas, potiusque ut ueniam impertias, si per negligentiam forte non elegi illud tuum Atticum Zarat, ut in eo nascerer.

Why did I offer this account? So that you, Aemilianus, may from now on be less indignant towards me, and grant me pardon instead, if through negligence I by chance did not choose that Attic Zarat of yours as the place to be born.

Apuleius' sarcastic joke is obviously grounded on the juxtaposition between the poor provincial African village of Aemilianus' birth and the cultural supremacy of the Greek language. Yet, immediately following this passage, he complains about Aemilianus' 'contradictory claims' (*contraria*), summarising the discussion of his *patria* as: 'Greek grandiloquence but barbarian birthplace' (*eloquentiam Graecam, patriam barbaram*). Aemilianus' 'Attic Zarat' is, therefore, glossed in terms of Apuleius' own contradictory origins. Apuleius' sarcasm immediately makes the distinction between his own erudition compared to the ignorant Aemilianus; yet at the same time he uses the ignorant Aemilianus' birthplace to make his point. However, there could be another interpretation that makes more of this paralleling of Aemilianus and Apuleius in the speech. Even though both are from the provinces, Apuleius' focus on their present difference intimates that there was at one time a moment at which Apuleius took the path of education and Aemilianus did not. This distinction is reiterated throughout the speech and is often seen merely as Apuleius denigrating his prosecutor. Yet another approach explains that Apuleius' characterisation of Aemilianus (just as Aemilianus' characterisation of Apuleius) is set up as a contrast in educational aims and styles, not only to show Apuleius as the better educator (*magister*), but even to show how he educates Aemilianus as proof. This pedagogic theme is brought out in the second half of the speech when Apuleius replays the family drama in which his stepsons – Pontianus and Pudens – are educated by Apuleius and Aemilianus respectively. Indeed, the misguided education of Pudens at the hands of Aemilianus has resulted in this very trial of Apuleius. In short, Apuleius can reverse this education by either replacing Aemilianus' 'lessons' with his own erudition

or, even harder, to somehow educate Aemilianus himself. In this context we can see how the philosophising of the autobiographical fact of Apuleius' *patria* can turn into the autobiographising of philosophy in Apuleius' role as *magister*. So, when Apuleius extends his autobiographical discussion of his own *patria* into a presentation of philosophical ethics and Plato's theory of the immortality of the soul, he is doing so, not only to show his erudition as a philosopher, but to philosophise about a fundamental issue at the centre of his trial: Apuleius 'lesson' to Aemilianus.

This trajectory from autobiography to philosophy and back again is also a key element in the *Florida* 18 speech. The reference to his philosophical education in Athens as a 'perfection' of his formative years in Carthage does not merely replay the development of philosophy in the image of *De Platone*. Instead, the bringing home of that education in the form of the present speech in Carthage acts as payment (*merces*) for his formative education there. Moreover, as we shall see, it is the complex of anecdotes of the sophist Protagoras and the wise man Thales that surround the articulation of this payment (*merces*) which comprise the philosopher's lesson. In other words, Apuleius initiates the philosophical education of Carthage to both parallel his own intellectual development and to 'pay' them for their hand in it. Seeing *Florida* 18 and the other excerpted speeches delivered in Carthage in this way, we cannot disregard Apuleius' identity as a philosopher as somehow boosting his intellectual standing in his community. As with the *Apologia*, philosophy must be the end-point for his audience. In this way, these works, as with *De Platone*, *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis*, enact a protreptic message. Autobiography is the key methodology for Apuleius' protreptic message in both the *Apologia* and *Florida*, but, as in the other works, he incorporates different voices as well. It will be through examination of the extension of Apuleius' autobiographical methodology to other voices in these works that we can best construe his role as Platonist philosopher in the *Apologia* and of the more general figure of the philosopher in the *Florida*.

The philosopher and his masks

How does Apuleius extend his autobiographical methodology in the *Apologia* and *Florida*? Let us return briefly to *De deo Socratis*, the work in which we found the autobiographical element missing, but the ethical and performative role key. The protreptic conclusion of *De deo Socratis* reaches a crescendo with the issue of true praise and the example of Odysseus/Ulysses (*Soc.* 24.176–7):

quin igitur et tu ad studium sapientiae erigeris uel properas saltem, ut nihil alienum in laudibus tuis audias, sed ut, qui te uolet nobilitare, aequè laudet, ut Accius Vlixen laudauit in Philocteta suo, in eius tragoediae principio:

inclite, parua prodite patria,
nomine celebri claroque potens
pectore, Achiuis classibus auctor,
grauis Dardaniis gentibus ultor,
Laertiade.

nouissime patrem memorat. ceterum omnes laudes eius uiri audisti: nihil inde nec Laertes sibi nec Anticlia nec Arcisius uindicat: tota, ut uides, laudis huius propria Vlixi possessio est.²⁸

So why is it that you too are not bent on the pursuit of wisdom? Or at least why are you not rushing to guarantee that you hear nothing extraneous in people's praises of you, but instead, so that the person wishing to give you glory should praise you in the manner Accius praised Ulysses in his *Philoctetes*, at the beginning of that tragedy:

Famous one, product of a humble homeland,
of celebrated name and honourable heart,
director to the Greek fleets,
dread avenger on the Trojan race,
son of Laertes.

The poet mentions his father last of all. But all of that man's remaining praises you have already heard: none of which can Laertes claim for himself, nor Anticlea nor Arcisius. You see how Ulysses owns the totality of his praises.

²⁸ On the textual problem <er>i[n]geris, see the apparatus at Moreschini (1991) 37. Beaujeu (1973) 44, has *accingeris*. I also maintain the transmitted *nec* before *tota* which is typically deleted.

Apuleius' signalling of how the patronymic in Accius' passage comes after all other aspects of praise, including Ulysses' 'celebrated name' (*nomine celebri*) and 'honourable heart' (*claro...pectore*) intimates that it is somehow secondary. Yet, at the same time, none of these causes for praise can be claimed by his father, mother, or grandfather, nor can Ulysses be seen as in complete possession of his own fame. Apuleius explains what he means in the following sentence (*Soc.* 24.177–8):

nec aliud te in eodem Vlixē Homerus docet, qui semper ei comitem uoluit esse prudentiam, quam poetico ritu Minervam nuncupavit.

Nor does Homer teach you anything else about that same Ulysses. He wanted Ulysses' companion always to be Prudence, whom with poetic diction he called Minerva.

Apuleius proceeds to relate key scenes from the *Odyssey* in which Minerva/*prudentia* aids Ulysses. In this way, while we can follow Accius' 'praise' in seeing the limitations of his inherited qualities, we must return to Homer's 'teaching' to understand that what truly grounds Ulysses' achievements is the supplementation of *prudentia* in the guise of Minerva. In short, the allegorising reading of the *Odyssey*, which has been intimated throughout the lecture, is exploited to signpost the philosophical message of the poem.²⁹ This message is enacted by the link between Ulysses and Socrates, a link Apuleius makes elsewhere in his corpus.³⁰ The ethical force of *prudentia* as a leading virtue is outlined in *De Platone*, where *prudentia* is the rational part of the soul and the guiding principle of the state.³¹ In these passages *prudentia* is linked with 'wisdom' (*sapientia*). If we return to *De deo Socratis*, the protreptic passage that emphasised philosophy as 'the pursuit of wisdom' (*sapientiae studium*) is played out through the character of Ulysses and his supporting *prudentia* in the form of Minerva.

²⁹ On Apuleius' use of Homer in the speech, see Harrison (2000).

³⁰ *Met.* 9.13 and 10.33. On these passages, see Graverini (2012). In the *Met.*, both Ulysses and Socrates are depicted according to their pre-eminent *prudentia*: Ulysses is called 'that man of the highest prudence' (*summae prudentiae uirum*), while Socrates is called 'the old man of divine prudence' (*diuinæ prudentiae senex*).

³¹ *Pl.* 2.6.228; 2.9.234; 2.24.255.

This dramatisation of a philosophical message in the guise of a mythological character is also apparent in both *Apologia* and *Florida*. In the former, amid a discussion of the philosopher's 'wealth' as poverty, Apuleius introduces the topic of the cloak and staff he is accused of carrying around with him. In terms of his own philosopher-costume, he cites the example of the Cynic philosopher Crates, followed by the figure of Hercules for good measure (*Apol.* 22.9–10):

ipse denique Hercules inuictus – quoniam haec tibi ut quaedam mendicabula animis sordent – , ipse, inquam, Hercules lustrator orbis, purgator ferarum, gentium domitor, is tamen deus, cum terras peragraret, paulo prius quam in caelum ob uirtutes ascitus est, neque una pelli uestitior fuit neque uno baculo comitator.

And finally, even invincible Hercules himself – since these others are dirty liar-beggars in your mind – Hercules that globe-trotter, beast-slayer, people-tamer, that god nevertheless, wandering the earth shortly before he was taken up into heaven on account of his virtues, wore no more than the single pelt, and wore no more than the single staff.

This move from the Cynic Crates to Hercules is also made in *Florida* 22 and then back again, as Crates is described as 'similarly opposing anger, jealousy, greed and lust, and other monstrous passions and shameful acts of the human soul, that philosopher was a Hercules indeed' (*similiter aduersum iracundiam et inuidiam atque auaritiam atque libidinem ceteraque animi humani monstra et flagitia philosophus iste Hercules fuit, Fl.* 22.3).

These portraits of mythical figures as proto-philosophers (Ulysses as Socrates; Hercules as Crates) have typically been seen as a straightforward representation of Apuleius' own philosophical 'role' in *Apologia* and *Florida*.³² However, the *Apologia* passage offers an important caveat to the total identification between Apuleius and such figures, when Apuleius writes (*Apol.* 22.6–7):

³² See Harrison (2000) 38 with n. 135 on Apuleius the 'Latin Sophist' as Hippias.

non sunt quidem ista Platonicae sectae gestamina, sed Cynicae familiae insignia.

Indeed these [the bag and staff] are not the accoutrements of the Platonic sect, but the insignia of the Cynic family.

At another point Apuleius reiterates his distance from the Cynics and reaffirms his Platonic identity on the topic of knowing the names and characteristics of varieties of fish (*Apol.* 39.1):

utrum igitur putas philosopho non secundum Cynicam temeritatem rudi et indocto, sed qui se Platonicae scholae meminerit – utrum ei putas turpe scire ista an nescire, negligere an curare, nosse quanta sit etiam in istis providentiae ratio an de diis immortalibus matri et patri credere?

Therefore, do you think, for a philosopher – , and not one who is rough and ignorant in line with Cynic recklessness, but one who remembers that he is part of the Platonic school – do you think for him is it shameful to know those things or not to know them, to neglect them or cultivate them, to know how great is the reason of Providence in these matters too, or to pay credence to our parents about the immortal gods?

These passages from the *Apologia* are obviously a major problem for any argument that relies on Apuleius' total identification with Crates the Cynic in *Florida* 22. But if we begin by investigating why Apuleius distances himself from the Cynics in the *Apologia*, we may begin to find a more nuanced approach to his identification with them in the *Florida*. Part of the answer lies, as in how we saw the differences between *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis* at work, in differences within the Platonic tradition. The point here is the distinction between the Socratic legacy (of the Cynics) and the Platonic tradition of Aristotelianism. As a Platonist, Apuleius can at one time emphasise his affinity with Socrates and at another distance himself from his legacy, by expressing his refined brand of Platonism. Another part of the rationale for sometimes associating himself with the Cynics and at others emphasising his Platonic distance from them is determined by Apuleius' audience. As we shall see, the whole speech is orchestrated as a dialogue between two different conceptions of philosophy as demarcated by the learned judge Maximus and the rustic prosecutor Aemilianus. Yet this polarisation is also the key to how

the second half of the speech, which is completely devoid of Platonic quotations or moments of exegesis, expands beyond the question of types of philosophy and opens out into dramatic narrative portraying the role of philosophy as a mode of education. In short, appropriating Crates in the *Florida* but distancing from the same figure in the *Apologia* allows Apuleius to play different roles in these works.

Role-play also makes sense of the distinction between the 'Platonising' *Apologia* and the more general 'philosophising' in the *Florida* collection. Apuleius' portrait of the philosopher in his corpus, like his portrait of philosophy itself, is comprised of the same elements that make up the Platonic biography. The snag is that, as with his literary corpus, Apuleius can never show all aspects of the Platonic biography at once. Specifically because of this limitation, he must adopt different facets, don different masks, of the Platonic philosopher at different points in his philosophical 'performances'. In fact, if we return to the differences between the issue of the explicit Platonism of the *Apologia* and the implicit (Platonic) philosophy of the *Florida*, this also hinges directly on his autobiographical – authorial – identity as a Platonist while the rest represent a whole range of roles. Here the protreptic function arises again: what kind of lesson can a Platonist teach, as distinct from the philosopher in general?

Apuleius delineates the role of the philosopher as markedly separate from other 'performers' and 'professions'. He also uses the settings of the trial and stage to act out the philosopher's role in other guises (e.g. the use of mythical characters). But there is one essential 'role' for the philosopher that is internal to its status and one that is essential for our understanding of Apuleius' Platonism. This whole book has emphasised the explicit nature of Apuleius' Platonism. We saw the difference between *De mundo* and the core biographical exegesis of *De Platone* and the interpretation of *De deo Socratis* as a difference in the explicit role of Plato in their exegetical narratives. With *Apologia* and *Florida* we have a similar issue. Why is the philosopher on trial in the *Apologia* explicitly a Platonist, but in the *Florida* a philosopher more generally? Tackling this

question raises yet another: what role does (and should) philosophy have in society in Apuleius' day? How does a philosopher resist the contemporary popularity of his alter ego, the sophist? My answer to both questions is that the philosophical situations of the *Apologia* and *Florida* demand different conceptions of philosophical methodology grounded in Apuleius' autobiography.³³ In the *Apologia* Apuleius has to defend himself against the caricature of the philosopher as argued by the prosecution. His most potent tool for doing so is through a particular kind of erudition and teaching. Since his caricature is that of the 'Platonic philosopher', he will show the prosecution what a Platonic philosopher is and what Platonism teaches. In this way, Apuleius defends philosophy in general by playing his role as a Platonist philosopher. Yet even though Apuleius is a Platonist, in the context of the *Apologia* this is still a role, as can be most clearly seen in the first (and only) use of the phrase *Platonicus philosophus* in the speech (*Apol.* 10.6–7):

sed Aemilianus, uir ultra Vergilianos opiliones et busequas rusticanus, agrestis quidem semper et barbarus, uerum longe austerior, ut putat, Serranis et Curiis et Fabriciis, negat id genus uersus Platonico philosopho competere. etiamne, Aemiliane, si Platonis ipsius exemplo doceo factos?

But Aemilianus, a man who surpasses Virgilian shepherds and cow-herds in his coarseness, who, ever rustic and barbaric, is actually far more austere, so he thinks, than a Serranus, Curius or Fabricius, denies that this type of verse is suitable for a Platonic philosopher to compose. Would you still hold this view, Aemilianus, if I teach you that these poems were made after Plato's very example?

Apuleius is responding to the argument of the prosecutor Aemilianus that a Platonic philosopher should not compose

³³ I borrow the idea of a 'philosophical situation' from Badiou (2009), who defines it as a confrontation adopted by a philosopher with a twofold aim: one, to 'clarify the choice, the decision of philosophy', and two, to 'clarify the distance between power and truth' dramatised by this choice of philosophy. The explicitly 'dramatic' aspect of this encounter is emphasised at Badiou (2009) 3 when he reads the choice between tyranny and virtue in Plato's *Gorgias* as 'set out in an entirely theatrical fashion' between Callicles and Socrates and 'the two different kinds of thought' they both represent for Plato. This example is perhaps the ultimate philosophical situation given that it is the one played out between philosopher and sophist (Callicles as *Gorgias*' pupil), a pivotal confrontation in Badiou's philosophical work (e.g. Badiou (1999) and beyond, and one that is also essential for Apuleius, especially in *Fl.* 18.

poetic verses. What is striking, however, is that Aemilianus' characterisation of Apuleius as a Platonic philosopher is mimicked by Apuleius' characterisation of Aemilianus as a Virgilian shepherd. The adjectives *Vergilianus* and *Platonicus* are neatly paralleled in this passage and, as we shall see, manipulated by Apuleius in ensuing passages. On one level, Apuleius is making Aemilianus the butt of a learned joke, thus showing intellectual affinity with the case's judge, Claudius Maximus, but on another level, Apuleius is making a pertinent point about the nature of mimesis that needs careful elucidation: the difference between a character in an author's work and an affiliation to a philosophy. Throughout Apuleius' speech he will caricature members of the prosecution as if they are stock types from a Roman comedy.³⁴ Yet he saves the Virgilian characterisation exclusively for Aemilianus, who is not only a shepherd from the *Eclogues* but also Charon and Mezentius from the *Aeneid*.³⁵ The way that Apuleius differentiated himself from both the comic stereotypes and the Virgilian characters is to emphasise his role as a Platonist author. Thus, the *Platonicus philosophus* is, unlike a *Vergilianus opilio*, not the character of the philosopher in the works of Plato, but an author as a philosopher in Plato's image.

As for Apuleius' education of Carthage in the *Florida*, as opposed to his education of Aemilianus in the *Apologia*, he needs to emphasise instead not what a Platonist is in relation to a Cynic, but what a philosopher is in relation to other intellectual performers of their day, especially the sophist. The sophist, in the Platonic tradition, may be the supreme philosophical impostor, but for Apuleius' audience they seem to be operating as the philosophers of their day.³⁶ By practising public speaking, as an orator in the context of the theatre, Apuleius is duplicating the role of the contemporary sophist and even trades

³⁴ For a detailed reading in this vein, see May (2006) 73–108.

³⁵ Charon at *Apol.* 23.7 and 56.7; Mezentius at *Apol.* 56.7, 56.9 and 89.4. Recall how the figure of Mezentius is brought in as exemplary against Apuleius and Plato at *Soc.* 5.131.

³⁶ Sophists and philosophers in the Second Sophistic, see Gleason (1994), Gordon (1996) 8–42 and Bowersock (2002).

on the attributes of the sophist (e.g. public speaker, the question of payment). However, as we shall see, it is precisely in this setting and in the speeches of the *Florida* collection that Apuleius writes as a Platonist by speaking as a philosopher more generally. In many ways, this repeats the founding gesture of Apuleius' Platonism – Plato's creation of the body of philosophy – as the ultimate impersonation of philosophy.

The Plato defence: *Apologia*

The *Apologia* offers a representative range of Apuleius' Platonism from across the corpus, comprising moments of Platonic citation and exegesis amid the overall portrait of the *Platonicus philosophus* on trial. Even the whole set-up of the philosopher's speech of self-defence, needless to say, is one with Platonic precedent: his own *Apology* of Socrates.³⁷ In spite of the richness of this work from a Platonic perspective, any philosophical discussion has been preoccupied with tying it to the other works on a doctrinal level.³⁸ Yet, while correspondences between Platonic doctrine articulated in the *Apologia* and *De mundo*, *De deo Socratis* or *De Platone* do exist, what is more pertinent to my analysis is how this portrayal of the Platonist on trial fits into the methodology of Platonic teaching elsewhere in the corpus and how Apuleius' Platonism fits into the very fabric of the defence speech. To this end, the most basic question is: how does the philosopher-speaker, on trial, relate to the methodological strategies of *De Platone*, *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis*? Each of these philosophical works has a part to play in the presentation of Platonism in the *Apologia*. Apuleius' self-portrait as *Platonicus philosophus* mobilises his Platonism through exemplary philosophical figures, the explicit citation of Platonic texts and exegesis of Platonic theories. In terms of the transition from Plato's biography to Apuleius'

³⁷ This has been a mainstay in the literature on the speech, obviously helped by the comparable titles. Too much, however, has been made of Apuleius' Socratic position, rather than his Platonic model. See most recently the more nuanced view of Riess (2008a).

³⁸ E.g. Moreschini (1978) and Hijmans (1987).

autobiography, this portrait explicitly transfers the dynamic between biography and exegesis in *De Platone* onto the autobiographical position of the philosopher on trial and the delivery of a speech in his defence. Furthermore, accounting for the philosopher's life in general and the Platonic life in particular, Apuleius' Platonising in the speech can be mapped onto the idealised portrait of Plato in *De Platone*. The ways in which the exegetical modes of *De mundo* (universal) and *De deo Socratis* (daemonic) expand on the exegesis of *De Platone* can also be seen in the *Apologia*. The catascopic perspective is transformed in the *Apologia* into the way Apuleius utilises the particular setting of the trial as a unique 'philosophical situation', where he can transform the attack on his own philosophical identity into a defence of philosophy as a whole. As for the daemonic role of the *interpres* in *De deo Socratis*, this works in the *Apologia* through the dynamic between Apuleius and his audience, specifically the judge Maximus and the prosecutor Aemilianus. In the process, the Platonism of the speech also has a protreptic function through the affiliation between the speaker and the judge Maximus and the Platonist philosopher's role in the education of the prosecutor Aemilianus. Apuleius mobilises the 'philosophical situation' of the trial to offer an idealised portrait of the author as Platonic philosopher and also to once again dramatise the two strands of Platonic philosophy in the form of the learned judge and the rustic Aemilianus.

De magia: *Platonising magic*

While Apuleius introduces his speech in terms of the defence of philosophy in general (*Apol.* 1.3), he ends the first half by stating that he adheres to Plato in particular – 'not only as teacher for life, but also as my advocate in court' (*ut uitae magistro, ita causae patrono*, *Apol.* 65.8). Apuleius achieves this defence of philosophy by elucidating his Platonism in a punning reference to his quotation of Plato's *Laws*. This means that we are asked to read the first half of the speech, not merely as a defence of philosophy in general, but also as a process of the 'Platonisation' of the speaker. While Apuleius must not only ground his

specific affiliation to Platonism within a broader philosophical context, he must also expand his Platonism to that of philosophy in general. The main way in which Apuleius maintains this dynamic is by offering various exemplary parallels from the history of philosophy for each point of his defence, while also utilising Platonic quotation and exegesis to make his Platonic position as explicit as possible. For example, in responding to the core accusation of being a magician, Apuleius moves from quoting Plato's definition of magic from the *Alcibiades*, to offering an exegesis of the passage, finally opening out his discussion to general philosophical figures who have been accused of magic. But in his earlier defence of writing bewitching love poetry, Apuleius offers examples of philosophers who wrote such poetry, quotes Plato's poetry and not only offers a reading in the poems, but also supplements this with an exegesis from the *Symposium*. There are also moments in the defence when Apuleius employs a different strategy based on the specific needs of the charge. For example, in the opening defence of beauty and eloquence, Apuleius quotes Homer, then offers an interpretation of the passage, before moving on to examples of beautiful philosophers, for which Plato merely works as a source. These variations in Apuleius' Platonising must still be understood in the context of the speech and as part of the developmental portrait of the Platonic philosopher. We shall approach the speech in terms of the three main stages: the minor charges, exemplified by the discussion of poetic composition; the introduction of the main charge of magic; and the extended defence of magical practices. As we shall see, this trajectory for the speech also represents a developmental portrait of the Platonic philosopher, from pre-philosophical poet to philosophical researches and culminating in philosophical practice in the form of teaching.

Apuleius introduces the topic of his composition of erotic poetry after dismissing other related charges of beauty and eloquence, as well as his playful Catullan poem on teeth-washing. As we have already seen, the topic of Apuleius' erotic poetry is the explicit moment at which he introduces his Platonism through his identity as a Platonic philosopher. But the

opening of the charge presents the topic not in terms of Apuleius' Platonism but of his role as philosopher more generally (*Apol.* 9.4):

'fecit uorsus Apuleius'. si malos, crimen est, nec id tamen philosophi, sed poetae; sin bonos, quid accusas?

'Apuleius composed verses'. If they are bad, that is a charge, although not against a philosopher, but against a poet; if they are good, what do you accuse me of?³⁹

Apuleius immediately differentiates between his defence as a philosopher and the role of the poet. But when he uses the exemplary figures of love-poets, the prosecution are imagined to retaliate: 'Yes, but they were not philosophers'. To which, Apuleius offers examples of philosopher-poets – Solon, Diogenes the Cynic and Zeno of Citium. Here Apuleius explicitly grounds his behaviour in the generalised portrait of the philosopher, showing how poetic composition is nothing for him to be ashamed of, or to be attacked for, even though he is a philosopher and not a poet.

After quoting two of his poems, Apuleius refers to the additional point of censure that he uses fictional names of the boys he mentions. After the infamous passage on the *puellae* of Roman love-poets, Apuleius offers the example of Virgil's *Eclogues* in this topic (i.e. the use of names 'Corydon' for Virgil and 'Alexis' for Pollio's son) in his 'playful bucolic poem' (*bucolico ludicro*). This gives Apuleius the opportunity to characterise Aemilianus as more rustic than a Virgilian shepherd or cow-herd, which counters the prosecutor's censorial attack on this Platonic philosopher who writes poetry. As we have already seen, this moment of characterisation is key to understanding how Apuleius' Platonic identity is thematised in the speech.

Apuleius' first point is to ask Aemilianus what he would say if 'I teach you these (verses) made after the example of Plato himself' (*Platonis ipsius exemplo doceo factos*, *Apol.* 10.7). This phrase is interestingly ambiguous, as it can, *inter alia*, also

³⁹ Compare the end of Horace *Sat.* 2.1, with its disarming humour as knockdown 'argument in court'.

mean ‘I teach you with an example of verse-making by Plato himself’. The exemplary function of Plato’s poetry is established both as a rationale for Apuleius’ composition of poetry and also as the means of defending such poetry. Apuleius continues (*Apol.* 10.7–8):

cuius nulla carmina extant nisi amoris elegia; nam cetera omnia, credo quod tam lepida non erant, igni deussit. discite igitur uersus Platonis philosophi in puerum Astera, si tamen tantus natu potes litteras discere.

None of his poems survive except love elegies; all the others, I presume because they were not elegant enough, he burned in the fire. So learn the verses of the philosopher Plato on the boy Aster, if you can learn letters at such an old age.⁴⁰

We shall return to this emphasis on teaching Aemilianus in the next section, but for now it is important to recognise how Apuleius moves from the exemplary status of Plato’s poetry (for his writing and as means of defence) to a brief biographical comment on why some of Plato’s verse survives and why some does not. The image of Plato burning his unsuccessful poetic compositions will become significant at the end of this section.⁴¹ Apuleius then quotes from three poems by Plato, only to ask why he is doing so in court, and introduces lines from Catullus and the Emperor Hadrian on how one’s verses are not markers of one’s morals.⁴² Apuleius returns to the Platonist poems for a touch of on-the-spot literary criticism (*Apol.* 11.5):

cuius uersus quos nunc percensui tanto sanctiores sunt, quanto apertiores, tanto pudicius compositi, quanto simplicius professi. namque haec et id genus omnia dissimulare et occultare peccantis, profiteri et promulgare ludentis est; quippe natura uox innocentiae, silentium maleficio distributa.

His verses, which I have just recited, are as pure as they are explicit, as chastely composed as they are plainly expressed. For disguising and hiding

⁴⁰ John Henderson suggest that behind this put-down is the idea of ‘learning the alphabet’, so starting here with A; and ‘the aster-isk’ as scribal glyph marking a lacuna.

⁴¹ See Tilg (2008) 118 for a discussion of this passage.

⁴² I discuss these poems in Fletcher (2009a) 49–56. For verse quotations in *Apol.*, in general, see May (2010).

these works and everything in this genre is offensive, while openly professing and publishing them is playful; in such a way, nature apportions voice to innocence, crime to silence.

Apuleius' reading of Plato's poems, in response to the verses of Catullus and Hadrian, transfers ethical qualifiers onto the words of the poetry itself. It is the verses that are pure, explicit, chaste and plain, not their authors, while for Catullus the poet is 'pure' (*castus*) and 'pious' (*pious*), and for Hadrian, his mind is 'chaste' (*pudicus*). In Plato's case, the verses are 'holier' (*sanctiores*), by being 'more open' (*apertiores*) and more 'chaste in their composition' (*pudicius compositi*) in being 'expressed in simpler terms' (*simplicius professi*). These attributes of the poems – their subject-matter and composition – also stretch to the fact of their publication. In many ways, this passage of interpretation of Plato's poetry enacts the difference Apuleius hinted at previously between writing poetry as a philosopher and 'being a poet'.

Further proof of this is then taken from Plato's main philosophical output in 'that lofty and divine Platonic concept' (*alta illa et diuina Platonica*, *Apol.* 12.1) of Common and Heavenly Venus borrowed from Pausanias' speech in the *Symposium* (180c–185e).⁴³ Here is the whole passage (*Apol.* 12.1–5):

mitto enim dicere alta illa et diuina Platonica, rarissimo cuique piorum gnara⁴⁴, ceterum omnibus profanis incognita: geminam esse Venerem deam, proprio quamque amore et diuersis amatoribus pollentis; earum alteram uulgariam, quae sit percita populari amore, non modo humanis animis, uerum etiam pecuinis et ferinis ad libidinem imperitare ui immodica trucique perculsororum animalium serua corpora complexu uincientem: alteram uero caelitem Venerem, praeditam quae sit optimati amore, solis hominibus et eorum paucis curare, nullis ad turpitudinem stimulis uel illecebris sectatores suos perculentem; quippe amorem eius non amoenum et lascium, sed contra incommittum et serium pulchritudine honestatis uirtutes amatoribus suis conciliare,

⁴³ Kenney (1990) reads this theory onto the Cupid and Psyche episode in the *Met.*, while Münstermann (1995) 15–21 uses it to make sense of the Socrates tale in Book 1.

⁴⁴ For the reading *gnara* for the transmitted *ignara*, see McCreight (1998), especially 50–5.

et si quando decora corpora commendet, a contumelia eorum procul abster-
rere; neque enim quicquam aliud in corporum forma diligendum quam quod
ammoneat diuinos animos eius pulchritudinis, quam prius ueram et sinceram
inter deos uidere.

For I shall not speak about that piece of profound and divine Platonism,
which is known to very few of the initiated, but completely unknown to the
profane multitude: that there is a duality to the goddess Venus, both of them
powerful in their specific erotic sphere and over different lovers. One is a
common Venus, who is incited by the common desire that compels not only
human souls, but also those of herds and wild beasts to feel lust with unbrid-
led and immoderate force, binding the servile bodies of these stricken ani-
mals in her embrace. But the other is a heavenly Venus, who is endowed with
the most noble desire, and is for humankind alone to cultivate, and only a
select few of them, striking none of her followers with torment or shameful
enticements; in fact her desire is neither pleasant nor alluring, but instead
unadorned and sober, melding her lovers to the virtues by the beauty of dig-
nity, and when she endorses decorous bodies, she keeps any disgrace far from
them; for nothing in corporeal beauty is to be loved except that which reminds
divine souls of the beauty they once saw true and pure amidst the gods.

This stunning moment of exegesis pans out from the speech
of Pausanias to a fully fledged account of the Form of Beauty
in the discourse of Diotima (211a–c).⁴⁵ Furthermore, the con-
trast between *forma corporum* and [*forma*] *eius pulchritudinis*
demonstrates the transition from the particular human erotic
encounter to the ‘divine souls’ recalling the Form of Beauty
with the problem of the Latin translation of Platonic ἰδέαι in
De Platone (Pl. 1.5.190–1.6.193) as *formae*. In addition, this
passage is explicitly targeted, following up on the interpreta-
tion of the Platonic epigram that precedes it and to prove that
Plato’s poetry is an account of both the heavenly form of Venus
and the Platonic theory of desire. First, Apuleius parallels Plato
himself in terms of the latter kind of desire, as *diuina* is used of
the Platonic concept as it is of the ‘divine souls’ (*diuinos animos*)
that encounter the Platonic Form of Beauty. Second, the Pla-
tonic doctrine of ‘recollection’ (*anamnēsis*) evoked here is then

⁴⁵ Pausanias’ bipartite Venus is trumped by the more specifically Platonic tripartite
division at Pl. 2.14.239–40. For the problem of Pausanias’ speech being understood
as simplistically Platonic, see Tarrant (2000b) 76 with n. 33.

used to interpret Plato's poetry plus a corrective reading of a non-Platonic poem immediately following this passage (*Apol.* 12.5):

Quapropter, ut semper, eleganter Afranius hoc scriptum relinquat:

amabit sapiens, cupient ceteri.

tamen si uerum uelis, Aemiliane, uel si haec intellegere unquam potes, non tam amat sapiens quam recordatur.

On account of which, Afranius put on record in his as always elegant way:

The wise man will love, the rest will feel lust.

– nevertheless, if you want the truth, Aemilianus, and if you can ever apprehend such matters, the wise man does not so much love as remember.

The correction of Afranius, furthermore, expands to the prosecutor Aemilianus. While the divine soul saw the true (*ueram*) and pure amidst the gods, if Aemilianus wants 'the truth/Truth' (*uerum*) and 'if he can understand/access the intelligible world' (*si haec intellegere unquam potes*), he too can grasp the Platonic theory of *anamnēsis*. This Platonic reworking of the line from Afranius and explicit references to Platonic desire and *anamnēsis* demand a re-evaluation of the whole discussion of love-poetry and Apuleius' quotation of Plato's epigrams.⁴⁶ The biographical details of the erotic poetry have been transposed into Platonic theories of desire and *anamnēsis*. Re-read after the Platonised Afranius line, the imperative for Aemilianus to 'learn' (*disce*) that opens the Platonic quotation acts as a challenge to Aemilianus and also as a promise on the part of Apuleius to teach the boorish prosecutor. Furthermore, the connection between learning and recollection is enacted by the parallel between the phrase *si...potes litteras discere* with *si haec intellegere...potes*, as the teaching of Platonic

⁴⁶ This 'Platonised' line of Afranius should be seen in close connection with Apuleius' use of Virgil in *Soc.* when he quotes the famous address of Nisus to Euryalus (*Soc.* 15.150 = *Aen.* 9.184f.) to expound his demonological theory. The use of poetry for philosophical ends is of course a very Platonic move and is in fact at work more generally with the role of Homeric quotation in the *Apol.*, as two references to Homer are mediated through the philosophical authorities of Crates (22.5) and Pythagoras (31.5). For the use of Homer in the *Apol.*, see Hunink (2008).

poetry enacts the process of *anamnēsis*; while the *recusatio* ‘I’ll stop recalling more’ (*ne pluris commemorem*), before the quotation of the line from the Dion poem, also hints at the language of memorialisation.

The conclusion of the charge summarises where we are (*Apol.* 13.1):

da igitur ueniam Platoni philosopho uersuum eius de amore, ne ego necesse habeam contra sententiam Neoptolemi Enniani pluribus philosophari; uel si tu id non facis, ego me facile patiar in huiusmodi uersibus culpari cum Platone.

Therefore grant pardon to the philosopher Plato for his verses on love, or else I will have to go against the pronouncement of Ennian Neoptolemus by philosophising excessively; or, if you do not do this, I will easily endure being criticised with Plato for writing this kind of verse.

Apuleius transforms a defence of love-poetry into a philosophical presentation on poetry ‘on love’ (*de amore*). From the moment that Plato is introduced into the speech as an *exemplum* for writing love-poetry, this has been the ideal opportunity for Apuleius to make the first attempt at defining the Platonic philosopher. Furthermore, the transition from Plato writing love-poetry (*amoris elegia*, *Apol.* 10.7) to verses on love (*de amore*) parallels the transition in Plato’s own biography from poet to philosopher.⁴⁷ Apuleius, therefore, in articulating the lofty desire of philosophy, has played the role of Socrates in the biography of Plato by expunging the ‘baseness of desire’ (*humilitatem cupidinis*) and cultivating the ‘glory of true praise’ (*uerae laudis gloriam*).

Apuleius’ Platonisation of his erotic poetry is instructive for seeing the differences between this minor charge and the main charge of magic to come. When introducing the defence of writing love-poetry, Apuleius intimates that it was introduced as part of the main charge for magic (*Apol.* 9.1–5) and once we reach this charge, Plato intervenes in a variety of ways. First, he helps to correct the prosecution’s definition of magic and, second, certain of his theories are used to counter specific points. In general, as Apuleius’ and Plato’s composition of poetry is

⁴⁷ On this as part of the title of the work, see Hunink (1997) 11. n. 1.

transformed into a philosophical lecture ‘on love’ (*de amore*), their joint philosophisation of magic makes the speech into a philosophical lecture ‘on magic’ (*de magia*). Within this transformation, Apuleius’ use of Plato undergoes its own change. For the definition of magic, Plato acts as an interpreter of Persian and Thracian customs; while for the defence of magical practices, we hear fully fledged Platonic doctrine, culminating in the ultimate verdict of the *Laws*. The difference in approach to Plato in the defence has its basis in the post-Socratic biography of Plato, his travels in search of other forms of knowledge and his ultimate role as philosophical teacher. The response to the charge of magic implicitly dramatises these stages as Apuleius moves from Plato’s magical researches in Persia and Thrace, to his word as law on magical practice.

Apuleius first calls on Plato to offer a (re)definition of magic (*Apol.* 25.8–10):

quae quidem omnis Aemiliano fuit in isto uno destinata, me magum esse, et ideo mihi libet quaerere ab eruditissimis eius aduocatis, quid sit magus. nam si, quod ego apud plurimos lego, Persarum lingua magus est qui nostra sacerdos, quod tandem est crimen, sacerdotem esse et rite nosse atque scire atque callere leges cerimoniarum, fas sacrorum, ius religionum, si quidem magia id est quod Plato interpretatur, cum commemorat, quibusnam disciplinis puerum regno adulescentem Persae imbuant...

Indeed, given that Aemilianus focused his whole accusation on this one matter – that I am a magician –, I would therefore like to ask his most erudite lawyers: what a magician is. For if, as I have read in many authors, the magician in the Persian language is equivalent to priest in ours, in the end what crime is it to be a priest, to discern with due observances, to know and be versed in ceremonial laws, the protocol of rites and the order of religious duties? If indeed magic is what Plato is interpreting, when he recalls with which areas of study the Persians imbue a boy growing up for the throne...

Here Apuleius, by having Plato ‘recall’ (*commemorat*) Persian education, paves the way for a Platonic quotation which he also introduces in the language of recollection (*Apol.* 25.10):

...uerba ipsa diuini uiri memini, quae tu mecum, Maxime, recognosce.

... I remember the very words of the divine man; Maximus, recall them along with me.

In the middle of quoting Plato's poetry, Apuleius conflates the 'recollection' of 'divine' Plato's texts with the immortal soul's 'recollection' of its glimpse of the divine. This approach, as we have seen, was one adopted throughout *De deo Socratis*. While Aemilianus was asked to 'learn' Plato's poetry, Maximus is asked to 'recognise' them.

The quotation from *Alcibiades* (121e–122a) emphasises how the education of the Persian prince consists of four teachers in each of the 'cardinal' virtues of wisdom, justice, courage and moderation. The first teacher (of wisdom) educates the boy in 'magic', which comprises the worship of the gods and the study of kingship. Apuleius responds to the quotation by addressing the prosecution (*Apol.* 26.1–3):

auditisne magiam, qui eam temere accusatis, artem esse dis immortalibus acceptam, colendi eos ac uenerandi pergnaram, piam scilicet et diuini scientem, iam inde a Zoroastre et Oromaze auctoribus suis nobilem, caelitem antistitam, quippe qui inter prima regalia docetur nec ulli temere inter Persas concessum est magum esse, haud magis quam regnare?

Did you hear, you who recklessly throw up accusations about it, that magic is an art dear to the immortal gods, informed as to their worship and reverence, pious, obviously, and knowledgeable about the divine, one that right from the time of its founders Zoroaster and Oromazes was noble, the high priestess of the heaven-dwellers, inasmuch as it is taught among the royal elite and it is not permitted for any random individual among the Persians to become a magician any more than to become king?

This paraphrase of the Greek quotation offers an implicit demarcation of the members of the trial who can only 'hear' Greek (Aemilianus) rather than 'understand' it (Maximus). It is immediately followed with another quotation, this time from the *Charmides* (157a) on the Thracian Zalmoxis. Apuleius links the same 'arts' of Zoroaster to what 'that same Plato wrote in another dialogue' (*idem Plato in alia sermocinatione... scriptum reliquit*, *Apol.* 26.4) which is 'about a certain member of the Thracian race, called Zalmoxis' (*de Zalmoxi quodam Thraci generis*, *Apol.* 26.4). As with the *Alcibiades*, the Greek is paraphrased by Apuleius to make his point about the

beneficial sense of magic, that Plato ‘discovered’ in these alternative branches of wisdom.⁴⁸

Mirroring the defence of love poetry, Apuleius emphasises this profound Platonic definition of magic to counteract a definition according to ‘common usage’ (*more uulgari*). Apuleius then shows how philosophers have been misrepresented as magicians because of their involvement with ‘hidden and divine powers’ (*occulta et diuina potentia*, *Apol.* 26.7) by listing the guilty culprits (*Apol.* 27.1–3):

uerum haec ferme communi quodam errore imperitorum philosophis obiecantur, ut partim eorum qui corporum causas meras et simplicis rimantur irreligiosos putent eosque aiant deos abnuere, ut Anaxagoram et Leucippum et Democritum et Epicurum ceterosque rerum naturae patronos, partim autem, qui prouidentiam mundi curiosius uestigant et impensius deos celebrant, eos uero uulgo magos nominent, quasi facere etiam sciant quae sciant fieri, ut olim fuere Epimenides et Orpheus et Pythagoras et Ostanes, ac dein similiter suspectata Empedocli catharmoe, Socrati daemonion, Platonis τὸ ἀγαθόν. gratulor igitur mihi, cum et ego tot ac tantis uiris adnumeror.

Indeed, these charges are generally made against philosophers as a result of a common error made by the ignorant, that some of those who peer into the true and simple causes of bodily entities they think are irreligious and they say that they deny the gods, such as Anaxagoras, Leucippus, Democritus and Epicurus and other advocates of the nature of things; and others, who extra-diligently track cosmic Providence and extra-lavishly worship the gods, are called magicians by the crowd, as if what they knew to happen were things they knew how to make happen, as once happened to Epimenides, Orpheus, Pythagoras and Ostanes, and then, similarly, the *Purification Rites* of Empedocles, the *daimonion* of Socrates and *The Good* of Plato have also been under suspicion. I must, therefore, congratulate myself, since I am counted among so many and such great men!

Here Apuleius’ list of misrepresented philosophers appears after the specifics of the Platonic definition of magic, thus reversing the order adopted in the defence of poetry. This ordering, however, and especially by ending the list with a reference to Plato’s infamously enigmatic public lecture on The

⁴⁸ See Fletcher (2009a) 56–61 for a more detailed discussion of these two passages and especially how Apuleius trades off wider reading of both dialogues in his brief and selective quotations.

Good, could intimate that the previous discussion of Plato's definition of magic has not been sufficient for a total defence of Apuleius' magical practices.⁴⁹ On the other hand, it could also act as a vital gloss on Plato's intellectual trajectory. Plato's definition of magic, unlike the lecture on *The Good* late in his career, is explicitly mediated by Persian and Thracian wisdom in the *Alcibiades* and *Charmides*. While we saw how the theory of *anamnēsis* reappeared in the way Plato's definition was introduced, the reference to Plato's 'interpretation' and 'recollection' of the practice of the Persians and the way that Plato 'left on record' the words of the Thracian magician, these are not specific Platonic theories, such as the basic division of desire in the *Symposium*. Comparing the use of Plato in the definition of magic to the earlier defence of poetry and, as we shall see, to the later account of magical practice, shows that he is playing a different role for Apuleius. The definition of magic reveals a particularly liminal stage in Plato's development and, by extension, Apuleius' defence. This would then mean that the reference to the lecture on *The Good* intimates a later, albeit equally misunderstood, stage as well. So, if the transition from love-poetry to poetry on love could be retold in the biographical narrative of Plato's conversion to philosophy, the Platonic texts used to offer a definition of magic parallels the post-Socratic stage of Plato's intellectual travels and researches, while the lecture on *The Good* would perhaps parallel the much debated Sicilian visits and their defence.

In *De Platone*, Apuleius tells us that the philosopher, during his Pythagorean quests for knowledge after the death of Socrates, not only stretched himself geographically but also intellectually. He went to Cyrene to learn geometry, he went to Egypt to learn about religious rites, 'he would have directed his mind to the Indians and Magi, had not wars in Asia at that time prevented him' (*atque ad Indos et Magos intendisset animum, nisi tunc eum bella uetuisent Asiatica*, *Pl.* 3.187).⁵⁰ This biographical argument also works for Apuleius himself,

⁴⁹ For Plato's lecture, see Gaiser (1980).

⁵⁰ For discussion of this passage as it relates to Pythagoras and *Fl.* 15, see Fletcher (2009b).

since these quotations appear after the discussion of Apuleius' 'barbarian' birth and origins (*Apol.* 24–5) and how his 'eloquence may be Greek, but his homeland is barbaric' (*eloquentiam Graecam, patriam barbaram*, *Apol.* 25.2) Here Apuleius cites Platonic texts to emphasise Plato's own access to and role in the transmission of 'barbarian' wisdom. But precisely because of this, the Platonic redefinition of magic is insufficient for his defence and he must push the matter further with more extended philosophising.

The passage that follows the list of philosophers mistaken for magicians has been understood as the nearest Apuleius comes to a *diuisio* or 'setting out' of what is to come in the rest of the speech.⁵¹ Apuleius mentions several of the important points to be addressed in detail later in the speech: his study of fish, the epileptic boy, the wooden statue, his marriage to Pudentilla and her letter. In each case, Apuleius must prove that his Platonic definition of magic can counteract the 'popular' view presented by the prosecution. As we shall see, in doing so, Apuleius calls on a different form of support from Plato (and his fellow Platonists) than he has demanded so far in the speech.

The lengthy defence of his scientific/magical study of fish concludes with a Platonic framing through a 'quotation' from Plato's *Timaeus* (*Apol.* 41.7):

at quidem hoc negotium ex lectione et aemulatione Aristoteli nactus sum, nonnihil et Platone meo adhortante, qui ait eum, qui ista uestiget, ἀμεταμέλητον παιδίαν ἐν βίῳ παίζειιν.

But indeed I discovered this business from a reading and emulation of Aristotle, and by the exhortation of my Plato, who says that the person who tracks down these things *plays a game in his life that cannot be regretted*.

Hunink states that the 'Greek quotation is a loose and imprecise reference to *Timaeus* 59d'.⁵² However, another way of seeing its 'reworking' of Plato's Greek is that Apuleius' citational use of Plato is itself a form of *play* (of hide and go seek) in

⁵¹ Hunink (1997) 87. ⁵² Hunink (1997) 126.

the trial.⁵³ Apuleius summarises his study of fish as caused by Plato urging him to read Aristotle. The whole passage on fish is firmly Aristotelian, but of an Aristotle represented among others as ‘lesser followers of Plato’ (*minores Platonis*, *Apol.* 36.3). This is also the moment at which Apuleius emphasises his Platonism in opposition to other philosophical schools, especially the Cynics (*Apol.* 39.1) and, in fact, unlike in the earlier definition of magic, Apuleius works philosophical *exempla* less in his account of ‘Platonic’ magical practice.

The topic of divination and the epileptic boy employs two moments of Platonic exegesis: a ‘survey’ account of *daemones* and a detailed reading of the *Timaeus*. In these two related discussions, Apuleius adopts different approaches to that of the Platonic exegete we have seen elsewhere in the corpus. The summary account of *daemones* occurs during a general account of tales of divination, ‘not only by public opinion, but also by the authority of learned men is this kind of miracle among boys confirmed’ (*nec modo uulgi opinione, uerum etiam doctorum uirorum auctoritate hoc miraculum de pueris confirmatur*, *Apol.* 42.5). After recalling reading a prophetic tale in the philosopher Varro and another of the philosopher Marcus Cato, Apuleius wonders if they can be true, but has no such disbelief for Plato (*Apol.* 43.1–2):

haec et alia apud plerosque de magiis et pueris lego equidem, sed dubius sententiae sum, dicamne fieri posse an negem, quamquam Platoni credam inter deos atque homines natura et loco medias quasdam diuorum potestates intersitas, easque diuinationes cunctas et magorum miracula gubernare.

These and other matters about magic and boys I read in several authors, but I am of doubtful opinion on whether to say they can happen or to deny them, although I do believe the opinion of Plato, that, between gods and humans, in nature and in location, there have been placed certain divine beings, and that they govern all divinations and magicians’ miracles.

The focus on Apuleius’ belief in Plato’s *sententia* then traces the trajectory of *De deo Socratis* in moving from *daemones* as

⁵³ Apuleius’ playfulness is a well-documented part of the speech. See Riess (2008a). This passage of Platonic play has not, however, featured in this trend. On which, see Fletcher (2009a) 73 n. 83.

intermediary powers to the embodied ‘human soul’ (*animus humanum*, *Apol.* 43.3). Next the two conceptions of *daemones* are conflated in the image of how the ‘divine power is fittingly lodged [in the boy], as in a good temple’ (*diuina potestas quasi bonis aedibus digne diuersetur*, *Apol.* 43.5). There may also be a subtle reference to the related Platonic theory of *anamnēsis* as well, when Apuleius describes how ‘his soul, when it is awakened, quickly returns to its own divinatory powers’ (*an ipse animus expergitus cito ad diuinationem suam redigatur*, *Apol.* 43.5). The Platonic tenor of this topic continues into Apuleius proving that he should not be accused of enchanting the boy Thallus because he is not like this figure described, but even suffers from epilepsy. Nonetheless, Apuleius offers a more explicitly Platonic account of the disease of epilepsy, thus bridging the two passages.

Unlike the previous moments of extended Platonic exegesis in the *Apologia* – of the two Venuses and of *daemones* – his account of the *Timaeus* shares several features with the methodology of biographical exegesis of *De Platone*, with some of the flourishes of *De deo Socratis*. At the opening of the account, Apuleius follows a strict biographical exegesis (*Apol.* 49.1–3):

Plato philosophus in illo praeclarissimo Timaeo caelesti quadam facundia uniuersum mundum molitus, igitur postquam de nostri quoque animi trinis potestatibus sollertissime disseruit et, cur quaeque membra nobis diuina prouidentia fabricata sint, aptissime docuit, causam morborum omnium triariam percenset. primam causam primordiis corporis adtribuit, si ipsae elementorum qualitates, uuida et frigida et hiis duae aduersae, non congruant; id adeo euenit, cum quaequam earum modo excessit aut loco demigrauit.

Plato the philosopher, in that most famous dialogue, the *Timaeus*, with a kind of heavenly eloquence, constructs the entire Universe, then after he has most skilfully discussed the tripartite powers of our souls and most fittingly taught why our various limbs were created by divine Providence, he calculates the cause of all disease to be threefold. He assigns the first cause to the fundamentals of the body, if the qualities of bodily elements, such as moisture, cold and their two opposites, do not coincide; which happens when any one of these becomes extreme or moves from its place.

The remainder of the account (*Apol.* 49.4–50.7) departs from biographical exegesis and Apuleius turns to a more general account of the disease that, while closely based on the *Timaeus*, is only partly based in ‘what Plato said’. The superlative adverbs used to describe Plato’s exposition are not a feature of the biographical exegesis of *De Platone*, although the emphasis on ‘heavenly eloquence’ does recall extension of this methodology in *De deo Socratis*. Later in the passage we have other recognisable features of Apuleius’ exegetical methodology. For example, the summarising aside that we encountered in *De mundo* (‘on which topic I have started to speak’, *de quo dicere exorsus sum*, *Apol.* 50.1), and the use of Greek terminology (‘the divine disease, as the Greeks truly called the *sacred disease*’, *diuinum morbum, ita ut Graeci ἱερὸν νόσον uere nuncuparunt*, *Apol.* 50.7). Furthermore, the markedly Apuleian tendency to tailor the exegetical mode to the topic under discussion is apparent here. The majority of the exegesis treats the purely bodily causes of epilepsy. Yet when Apuleius reaches the account of how the disease reaches the ‘ruling part of the soul’ (*regalem partem animi*, *Apol.* 50.4) his language becomes more elaborate and the metaphors more extravagant. He opens with an image, borrowed directly from the *Timaeus* (70a), and also employed in *De Platone*, of when ‘there [the disease] debilitates the regal part of the soul, which, powerful with Reason, resides at the pinnacle of man like a citadel and palace’ (*ilico regalem partem animi debilitat, quae ratione pollens uerticem hominis uelut arcem et regiam insedit*, *Apol.* 50.4).⁵⁴ Then he extends it beyond Plato’s account to the ‘divine roads’ (*diuinas uias*, its ‘course of wisdom’ (*sapientis meatus*) becoming obstructed and disturbed (*Apol.* 50.5), when the disease hits. At the end of the passage, Apuleius reiterates the conflation of the name of the disease with the place it affects, as it ‘defiles the rational part of the soul, which is by far the most sacred’ (*uidelicet quod animi partem rationalem, quae longe sanctissimast, eam uiolet*, *Apol.* 50.7). Here the concluding superlative mirrors those that opened the exegesis to describe Plato’s teaching, whereby

⁵⁴ See *Pl.* 2.5.227 and *Pl.* 2.6.228 and my discussion above.

Apuleius' account of Plato's divine wisdom is made to fit the topic of the divine disease perfectly.

Yet, perhaps the most interesting comparison between this account and the earlier treatment of *daemones* in countering the same charge, is that, while Apuleius wanted to prove that Thallus' epilepsy made him unsuitable for prophecy, the discussion of the *Timaeus* corresponds with that account. The earlier reference to the 'divine power being able to dwell worthily in him, as a fine house' (*in eo aut diuina potestas quasi bonis aedibus digne diuersetur*, *Apol.* 43.5) is paralleled in the Platonic metaphor of the royal part of the soul sitting in the head, 'as it resides in a citadel and a palace' (*uelut arcem et regiam insedit*). Thus, the two Platonic passages – on divination and epilepsy – agree, but the ways that they are introduced into the speech differ: the former as part of various accounts of divination, while the latter is part of the cure that Apuleius used to help a woman with epilepsy. Furthermore, the *Timaeus* passage is introduced to Maximus in the same terms of the theory of *anamnēsis* as previous quotations. Apuleius has been explaining why an old epileptic woman was brought to him by doctors for examination and why he asked her about ringing in her ears. He then transitions to the *Timaeus* passage with the following comment (*Apol.* 48.13):

dicam igitur quam breuissime potuero; etenim admonendus es mihi, non docendus.

Therefore I shall speak, as briefly as I can; since you must be reminded by me, not taught.

Note how the superlative *breuissime* contrasts with those used to describe Plato's account (e.g. *sollertissime disseruit*) in the *Timaeus* and seem to mark a certain degree of modesty on Apuleius' philosophising role. Following his account of the *Timaeus*, Apuleius once again addresses Maximus (*Apol.* 51.1–2):

agnoscis, Maxime, rationem Platonis quantum potui pro tempore perspicue explicatam.

You recognise, Maximus, Plato's reasoning as clearly as I was able to explicate it transparently in the available time.

Here the structure of the introductory sentence is reversed, since it opens with the reference to *anamnēsis* (*agnoscis*) and concludes with Apuleius' (faux?) modesty about his exegetical role in relation to Platonic philosophy.

These two passages of Platonic exegesis are thus part of how Apuleius proves that what the prosecution call 'magic' is in fact philosophy. The same basic theory – the immortality of the soul – can not only explain strange stories of prophecy and divination, but also aid the cure of diseases like epilepsy. The focalisation of Maximus in the repeated use of the theory of *anamnēsis* merely brings the passages closer together. Finally, the differences in exegetical mode in each passage reflect how in the former Apuleius is showing how Plato fits into various accounts of divination, whereas the more eloquent and detailed exegesis of the *Timaeus* is part of his engagement with the philosopher-judge Maximus. In this way, Apuleius shows how, with Plato's help, magic can be redefined from popular opinion to the Platonic definition in the process of defending a charge. This reworking of the definition of magic through a series of Platonic lessons introduces Plato's role as teacher into the speech; a role that is emphasised in that last use of his works in the speech.

The final topic in which Plato plays an essential role in the speech is on the topic of the wooden statue (*Apol.* 61–5). After disproving its secret origins and skeletal appearance, he transitions to the question of the statue's name and, ultimately, to its material. For the latter two details Apuleius uses a variety of Platonic quotation and exegesis that is the most complex and finely wrought of the speech. In a transition from Aemilianus' misrepresentation of the wooden statue as a skeleton, Apuleius contrasts his own 'Platonic family' to the deceptive tricks of the prosecution (*Apol.* 64.3–4):

ceterum Platonica familia nihil nouimus nisi festum et laetum et sollemne et superum et caeleste. quin altitudinis studio secta ista etiam caelo ipso sublimiora quaequam uestigauit et in extimo mundi tergo stetit. scit me uera

The Plato defence

dicere Maximus, qui τὸν ὑπερουράνιον τόπον ἐτ οὐρανοῦ νῶτον legit in Phaedro diligenter.

But our Platonic family know nothing other than what is festive, joyous, serious, sublime and heavenly. In fact, in its lofty pursuit, that sect has even explored places higher than heaven itself and stood on the furthest edge of the Universe. Maximus knows that I am speaking the truth, since he has carefully read in the *Phaedrus* about *the place above heaven* and the *surface of heaven*.

As we shall see, this striking image of the ‘Platonic family’ speaks volumes about how Apuleius conceives of his identity as a Platonist in the trial and elsewhere in his writings.⁵⁵ Once again Apuleius focalises Maximus at a moment of Platonic quotation, yet rather than the usual play on Platonic *anamnēsis* we have Apuleius imagine him as a ‘careful reader’ of Plato. The dynamic between careful reading and the myth of the cosmic chariot in the *Phaedrus* parallels the preface to *De mundo*. There Apuleius parallels his own diligent study of Philosophy with her ability to survey and scrutinise the cosmos. The affinity with *De mundo* continues in the following discussion of the supreme deity and the issue of remaining silent about his power. While Maximus has ‘read carefully’ (*legit . . . diligenter*) about the cosmic realm, he ‘understands’ (*intellegit*) the name Apuleius uses for his wooden statue because Plato refers to it in his *Second Epistle* (2.312 d–f) and the issue of its secrecy. Here is a prime moment of Apuleius impersonating not only Plato’s voice, but also his silence.⁵⁶

Apuleius ends the Platonisation of his speech with Plato’s verdict from the *Laws* (955e–956e) on the material of his personal statue (*Apol.* 65.1–8):

idque eos arbitror non tam ignoscendi quam cognoscendi causa desiderare, ut hoc etiam scrupulo liberentur, cum uideant omnem suspicionem criminis abunde confutata. audi igitur cui cura cognoscere est, sed animo quantum potes erecto et attento, quasi uerba ipsa Platonis iam senis de nouissimo legum libro auditurus: θεοῖσι δὲ ἀναθήματα χρεῶν ἔμμετρα τὸν μέτριον ἄνδρα ἀνατιθέντα δωρεῖσθαι. γῇ μὲν οὖν ἐστία τε οἰκήσεως ἱερὰ πᾶσι πάντων θεῶν.

⁵⁵ Compare *Fl.* 15.26, when Apuleius refers ‘our Plato’ (*noster Plato*) and how he ‘was adopted’ (*adoptarer*) into that name by his teachers.

⁵⁶ The topic of Platonic silence is raised in *Fl.* 15 in terms of his Pythagorean influences.

Platonism on trial and philosophy on stage

μηδεὶς οὖν δευτέρως ἱερὰ καθιερούτω θεοῖς. hoc eo prohibet, ut delubra nemo audeat priuatim constituere. censet enim satis esse ciuibus ad immolandas uictimas templa publica. deinde subnectit: χρυσὸς δὲ καὶ ἄργυρος ἐν ἄλλαις πόλεσιν ἰδίᾳ καὶ ἐν ἱεροῖς ἐστὶν ἐπίφθονον κτῆμα, ἐλέφας δὲ ἅπο λελιπότος ψυχῇν σώματος οὐκ εὐχαρί ἀνάθημα, σίδηρος δὲ καὶ χαλκὸς πολέμων ὄργανα· ξύλου δὲ μονόξυλον ὃ τι ἂν θέλῃ τις ἀνατιθέτω, καὶ λίθου ὡσαύτως. ut omnium assensus declarauit, Maxime quique in consilio estis, competentissime uideor usus Platone ut uitae magistro, ita causae patrono, cuius legibus obedientem me uidetis.

I think they want this not so much to forgive me but by a desire to know. In this way, they can be freed of their last concern, when they see that every suspicion of crime has been thoroughly refuted. So, listen, anyone who wishes to know, but, as far as you are able, do ensure you do so with an alert and attentive mind, as if you were about to hear the words of Plato, now an old man, from the final book of his *Laws*: *As for votive-offerings to the gods, it is proper for a modest man to present those of modest value. The land and everyone's household hearth are sacred to all the gods; therefore let no one consecrate them a second time.* With this he forbids anyone to dare set up sanctuaries privately. He believes public temples to be sufficient for citizens to sacrifice victims. He then adds: *In other states, gold and silver whether privately owned or in temples are objects that provoke envy; and ivory, which comes from a body which has been left by its soul, is not a pure offering; iron and bronze are instruments of war a single piece of wood or stone may be offered by whoever wishes.* As the general consensus has declared, Maximus and members of the council, I seem to have utilised Plato most competently, not only as life-coach, but also as my advocate in court, since you see my obedience to his laws!

This triumphant conclusion is the culmination of the Platonising in the speech. We finally hear Apuleius, as in *De deo Socratis*, speaking ‘as if’ (*quasi*) old-man Plato himself. This is not Plato’s poetry, nor his mediation of alien wisdom, but his own ‘laws’, whereby the nuanced biographical exegesis of *De Platone* is echoed, with Plato literally ‘laying down the law’. But perhaps the most significant aspect of this final act of Platonisation is how Apuleius directs neither the learned Maximus to ‘recollect’ nor the ignorant Aemilianus to ‘learn’ the judgement of Plato, but a more general audience of anyone who has the will, desire and dedication to know. This is the ultimate directing of Platonism into a protreptic for philosophy in general and it is this trajectory that helps explain the extended role of Apuleius’ Platonising in the remainder of the speech.

The Platonic family

After Apuleius' pun on Plato's laws/*Laws*, there are no more references to Plato until the end of the speech and the summarising of the wooden statue charge as on 'Plato's advice' (*Plato suadet*, *Apol.* 103.2). The use of quotation and exegesis, whether of Plato or in general, to display the defendant's learned character fades away and the narrative of the family drama that caused the trial takes centre stage. Nonetheless, there are two major ways in which the Platonisation of the first half of the speech continues into this narrative – first, in the methodology of that Platonisation in terms of the quotation and exegesis of Plato's Greek and, second, its ultimate pedagogic purpose and protreptic force. Both continuations of this Platonisation are directly present in the most pivotal piece of evidence in the trial: Pudentilla's letter. The letter, written in Greek and sent from Pudentilla to her eldest son, Pontianus, is cited by the prosecution (read out by her younger son, Pudens) as the key piece of evidence for Apuleius' identity as a magician. In what follows, we shall explore how this letter and its background not only dictate the particular forms of Platonisation in the speech, but also its ultimate protreptic goal.

After raising the issue of the letter of Pudentilla (*Apol.* 66), Apuleius gives some background to his marriage, his wife's family and the previous history of the main players (*Apol.* 66–78). Prominent in this background sketch are the two sons of Pudentilla – Pontianus and Pudens – and her first husband Sicinius Amicus (*Apol.* 68). After their father died and Pudentilla managed to avoid the machinations of her father-in-law to have her remarry his other son, Sicinius Clarus, they became heirs with Pontianus, Pudens' guardian. The next we hear of either is that Pontianus was living in Rome when he received a letter from Aemilianus about Pudentilla's decision to remarry (*Apol.* 69) and also a letter from Pudentilla herself (*Apol.* 70). The latter epistle is described and then read in court (*Apol.* 70). We are then told that Pontianus was the key player in the choice of Apuleius as Pudentilla's future husband: 'in choosing me, indeed, she followed her son rather than her heart' (*Apol.* 71).

Pontianus returned from Rome and in Oea met Apuleius who was on his way to Alexandria, and persuaded him to marry Pudentilla (*Apol.* 72). It is then that a period in the relationship between Apuleius and the sons of Pudentilla based on education and his role as a philosopher begins, sparked by a successful public philosophical performance (*Apol.* 73.3–4): This melodramatic scene offers several keys to the relationship between Pontianus and Apuleius and the way in which Apuleius' philosophical role becomes part of his attraction for a marriage with Pudentilla. He notes that (*Apol.* 73.3):

mox auditorio misso Pontianus eo principio me adortus consensum publicae uocis pro diuino auspicio interpretatur.

As soon as the audience departed, Pontianus came to me and opened with an interpretation of the consensus of the public voice of approval as a divine sign.

Then when making the decision to marry Pudentilla, Apuleius also cites his philosophical credentials (*Apol.* 73.4):

...si haec reputans formae et diuitiarum gratia me ad aliam condicionem reseruarem, neque pro amico neque pro philosopho facturum.

...if in thinking this over I reserved myself for another match for the sake of beauty and wealth, I would be acting as neither friend nor philosopher.

Pontianus understood Apuleius' successful public philosophy lecture as a divine sign that he should marry his mother and that he should do so as his duty as a philosopher. This comment about his identity as a philosopher is also raised in the issue of the dowry (*Apol.* 92). But then everything changed. Once Pontianus married, and came under the influence of his father-in-law, Herennius Rufinus, he broke his ties with Apuleius. The sensational description of Rufinus' machinations follows (*Apol.* 74–8), culminating in his depiction as an actor, playing the vengeful roles of Philomela, Medea or Clytemnestra against Apuleius. It is directly in response to Pontianus' being misled by Rufinus that Pudentilla wrote 'that most famous letter' (*illas famosissimas litteras*, *Apol.* 78.5).

Now, with this background, let us consider the discussion of the letter. This is not in fact the first time the letter has

been mentioned in the trial. As a dig at Aemilianus' lack of Greek, Apuleius states that he would have referred to Theocritus, Homer, Orpheus, Greek comedy, tragedy, historiography, but for the fact he 'noticed earlier that you were not able to read a Greek letter of Pudentilla's (*te dudum animaduertissem Graecam Pudentillae epistulam legere nequiuissse Apol.* 30.11).⁵⁷ This earlier reference to the letter has considerable bearing on how it mobilises Apuleius' earlier Platonising in the speech.

His initial line of defence is that Pudentilla's words may not be trustworthy, citing the case of Phaedra's false letter. He continues with the argument that just because she wrote that he was a magician, it doesn't mean that he is, just as if she had written that he was a consul, painter, doctor or an innocent man (*Apol.* 79). Finally, he discusses the issue of her sanity and how the fact that she actually admits to being insane seems to contradict her insanity (*Apol.* 79–80). Apuleius finally gets to the letter itself, stating that 'the letter itself loudly declares something quite different' (*ipsas litteras longe aliud clamantis, Apol.* 80.3). He then has the section read that he claims describes the 'same succession of events' that he has just gone through (*Apol.* 66–78). He gets to the remainder of the letter that was sent to defend him, but has instead become a means to accuse him (*in memet ipsum uertit cornua*, 'it turned its horns against me', *Apol.* 81.1).⁵⁸ Apuleius proceeds dramatically to reveal Rufinus as engineering this egregious piece of deception by selectively quoting the following passage from the letter (*Apol.* 82.2):

Ἀπολείος μάγος, καὶ ἐγὼ ὑπ'αὐτοῦ μεμάγευμαι καὶ ἐρῶ. ἔλθε τοίνυν πρὸς ἐμέ, ἕως ἔτι σωφρονῶ.

Apuleius is a magician, and I have been bewitched by him and I am in love. So come to me, while I am still sane.

We are told that 'these very words' (*ipsa uerba*) were 'excerpted and taken from their own context' (*excerpta et ab ordine suo seiugata, Apol.* 82.3) by Rufinus, and that he 'walked around

⁵⁷ In addition, there is a reference to the letter as 'wrongly read and evilly interpreted' (*Apol.* 28.5). There is also a passing reference to the letter as the source of the wooden statue charge (*Apol.* 61.1).

⁵⁸ On the letter's personification via this image, see May (2006) 105.

with them' (*circumferens*) 'as if with that woman's (i.e. Pudentilla) confession' (*quasi confessionem mulieris*). And while Rufinus was 'leading' (*ductans*) Pontianus through the Forum in tears, 'he was keeping the remainder of the letter hidden' (*cetera et infra scripta occultabat*, *Apol.* 82.4). Then Apuleius imagines someone asking for the whole letter to be read, because a cited passage can have gaps and a distorted tone (*Apol.* 82.7–8), and, asking Aemilianus to 'recognise' (*recognosce*, *Apol.* 83.1) the words, quotes the whole passage (*Apol.* 83.1):

νῦν δὲ ὡς κατηγοροὶ ἡμῶν κακοθήβεις σε ἀναπαίθουσιν, αἰφνίδιον ἐγένετο Ἀπολλείος μάγος, καὶ ἐγὼ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ μεμάγευμαι καὶ ἐρῶ. ἔλθε τοίνυν πρὸς ἐμέ, ἕως ἔτι σωφρονῶ.

But now, because our wicked accusers are misleading you, suddenly Apuleius became a magician, and I have been bewitched by him and I am in love. So come to me, while I am still sane.

The fuller quotation reveals how Apuleius' identity as a magician is a manipulation. The prosecution, by selective quotation 'made' Apuleius into a magician. This idea is nicely worked in by Apuleius by his inclusion of the words before the prosecution's quotation, wherein Apuleius 'suddenly became' (αἰφνίδιον ἐγένετο) a magician only in the accusations of Pontianus, under the guidance of Rufinus.

The personification of the letter now intensifies as Apuleius follows the recitation by saying if a letter had a voice of its own (punning on the technical term for vowels), if only words had wings, as the poets say, then given Rufinus' selective reading the rest of the letters would have called aloud that they were held back illegally and the 'suppressed words' (*uerba suppressa*) 'would have flown away' (*euolassent*), 'filling the whole Forum with tumult' (*totum forum tumultu complessent*). With this dramatic revelation, Pudentilla's letter becomes a form of defence and correct citation means that the truth is out and Rufinus' tricks are laid bare. So, while the culmination of the advocacy of Plato in the trial is the imagined voice of Plato, the crux of the defence is the freeing of the words in the misquoted letter of Pudentilla to speak. Furthermore, the polarised positions of the prosecution and the defence in their treatment of the

letter can be emphasised by the consistent imagery of light and dark, occult and open, implicit and explicit, utilised throughout the *Apologia*.⁵⁹ Maeve O'Brien connects this imagery with Apuleius' Platonism in the following terms:

Discourse dealing in untruth is properly located to the kind of dark and shady place where *magia ista* flourishes. A joyful and heavenly place is proper to the discourse that Apuleius uses, when and if he can. This philosophical and poetical discourse makes him an initiate into the *Platonica familia*, which includes philosophers and magicians and poets who use good words to describe all that is joyful, happy, reverent, lofty and divine.⁶⁰

Thus as the trajectory of Platonic citation climaxes with words spoken as if by the master himself, so does the unveiling of the machinations of the prosecution through the very words of Pudentilla's letter. This is most clearly seen in the confluence between the misleading use of the letter 'as if the woman's confession' (*quasi confessionem mulieris*, *Apol.* 82.3) with Apuleius' citation of Plato's *Laws* 'as if they were the very words of Plato' (*quasi ipsa uerba Platonis*, *Apol.* 65.4). As a result, Apuleius seems to be asking his audience to re-read his (selective) quotation of Plato in his defence in opposition to the (selective) quotation of Pudentilla's letter by the prosecution. Here Pontianus' mediating role is pivotal. If we can understand his role in the defence as at one time a pupil or follower of Apuleius, as outlined in the background narrative, then the issue of how he reads Pudentilla's Greek letter morphs into how Plato's Greek is read. The uncovering of the machinations of Rufinus not only makes Pudentilla's Greek letter clearer, but also enables Pontianus and Apuleius to return to good terms. After the reconciliation, Pontianus is grateful to Apuleius, and writes to him from Carthage. Apuleius has one of these letters read and addresses Pontianus' brother, Pudens, directly (*Apol.* 97.1):

audistine uocabula, quae mihi Pontianus frater tuus tribuerat, me parentem suum, me dominum, me magistrum cum saepe alias, tum in extremo tempore uitae uocans?

⁵⁹ For this imagery, evident from the exordium onwards, see Hunink (2001).

⁶⁰ O'Brien (2002) 7.

Did you hear the names, which your brother Pontianus gave to me, 'my father, my master, my teacher'? That is what he often used to address me, as well at the end of his life.

This then transitions to the tale of Pudens. After Pontianus' death, he turns over to Aemilianus and Apuleius describes his depraved 'education' including banqueting and frequenting gladiator schools, speaking Punic and not Latin (*Apol.* 98.5–9). It is with this account of Pudens' 'education', we can finally fill in all the gaps for the portrait of the prosecutor and accomplice at the beginning of the speech. Under Apuleius' guidance, Pudens went 'to school' (*ad magistros*, *Apol.* 98.6), but now spends his time in bars, brothels and gladiator schools.

Finally, after Pudentilla's will is read, where she shows her real 'insanity' in naming Pudens as heir, we arrive at the formal charge for the whole trial. The charge against Apuleius delivered by Pudens is corrected by Apuleius in the last moments of the speech. Addressing Aemilianus, Apuleius asks (*Apol.* 102.9–103.1):

quid tacetis? ubi illud libelli uestri atrox principium nomine priuigni mei formatum: 'hunc ego, domine Maxime, reum apud te facere institui'? quin igitur addis: 'reum magistrum, reum uitricum, reum deprecatorem'? sed quid deinde? 'plurimorum maleficiorum et manifestissimorum'.

Why are you silent? Where is that formal charge of yours with its savage starting-point, fashioned in the name of my stepson: 'I, lord Maximus, have initiated the trial of this defendant before you'? But why not add: 'this defendant teacher, this defendant stepfather, this defendant champion'? But what then? '... on a charge of multiple and overtly manifest magical practices'.

Apuleius' role as 'teacher' (*magister*) to Pudens parallels the letter of Pontianus. This quotation of the formal charge and Apuleius' supplements to it, at the very end of the speech, show how the charge of magic has been part of a complex family drama. If we now return to the Platonising section of the speech, what role does it have to play in the dynamic between Pudentilla's sons – the eloquent Pontianus and the ignorant Pudens? The contrast between the sons, when read onto the earlier section of the speech, has a great deal in common with the dynamic between Maximus and Aemilianus. Judge and

prosecutor, from the very opening of the speech, have been presented on opposing sides of a dichotomy and have operated at the level of addressing them at particular moments of Platonic quotation and exegesis. For example, in the Platonisation of poetry, Apuleius says that he is going to 'teach' (*doceo*) Aemilianus about Plato's poetry if he is not too old to 'learn' (*discere*). Then he corrects the Afranius line and again addresses Aemilianus in referring to the Platonic theory of *anamnēsis*, 'if you can ever understand this' (*si haec intellegere unquam potes*). The theory of *anamnēsis* raised in relation to Aemilianus is pushed further in terms of Apuleius' addressing of Maximus during later moments of Platonic quotation and exegesis. The dynamic between Aemilianus and Maximus in terms of Apuleius' Platonisation of his defence has previously been read as a simple dichotomy: the learned, philosopher-judge versus the rustic, ignorant prosecutor. The fact that it is precisely during a discussion with Aemilianus that Apuleius introduces the Platonic theory of *anamnēsis* amid consistent references to teaching mean that we cannot underestimate the nuances of the Maximus/Aemilianus dynamic. By the time we reach the end of the speech (*Apol.* 98), we are well aware of why Apuleius attacks Aemilianus in terms of issues of education. It is on account of his failed education of Apuleius' stepson, Pudens. This motive means that Apuleius' defence of philosophy is, ultimately, a protreptic. We can see that the Aemilianus/Maximus synergy is set up to show what happens when a youth has the wrong teacher. The extended narrative surrounding Pudentilla and her sons – the citation of her letter to Pontianus – is better understood when we appreciate the pedagogic force of Apuleius' speech.

When understood in this way, we cannot simply isolate the complex interplay of Platonic citation and exegesis to the establishing of Apuleius' 'learned character'. Instead, the specific question of his methodology of quoting Plato is made into a general point in the case of Pudentilla's letter and the basic protreptic force of his philosophising is grounded in his pedagogic role in the intricacies of a 'Platonic family' drama. In this way, Apuleius' *Apologia* is not just a general defence

of philosophy, nor the more specific defence of a Platonic philosopher, but both at the same time. Furthermore, with an appreciation of the way in which the second half of the speech hinges on the characterisation of the Platonic philosopher in the first half, we can appreciate the force of the image of the defence of Philosophy. Apuleius' fusion of his own defence with that of philosophy, then, becomes the key to his methodology in the speech as well as the equivalent to the image of the body of philosophy in *De Platone*.

The philosopher's audience: *Florida*

In contrast to the *Apologia*, the *Florida* offers a deceptively simple portrait of Apuleius as a popularising philosopher-speaker. It is this figure of the speaker – as a *persona* – that unites the varied nature of the collection of twenty-three excerpts of epideictic speeches delivered in Carthage throughout the 160s CE.⁶¹ In spite of attempts to refine its particular philosophical pedigree, Apuleius' *persona* as a philosopher-speaker and his philosophy in the *Florida* is sketched in broader brush strokes than that of the other works. Yet in many ways it is with the *Florida* that we can see the Platonic impersonation of philosophy in its most complete form.

Unlike the fusion of the Platonic life and teaching of *De Platone*, the ventriloquising of Plato of *De deo Socratis* and the projection of Apuleius' own life and teaching of the *Apologia*, the *Florida* portrays the philosopher amid the other competing forms of intellectual endeavour, especially the role of the contemporary sophist. Furthermore, this face-off between philosopher and sophist is enacted by Apuleius' presentation of the philosopher's life as implicitly, rather than explicitly, Platonic. In the *Florida* the developmental Platonic biography found in *De Platone* is reconfigured as differing characteristics of the philosopher-speaker. Approximating the trajectory in the Platonic quotations of the *Apologia*, Plato's various stages of development (birth and origins, education

⁶¹ On the *persona* of the *FL*, see Hunink (2004a).

and conversion to philosophy, travel and study and legacy) are evoked through extended biographical anecdotes in the collection: Apollo's contest with Marsyas (*Fl.* 3), Hippias' self-fashioning (*Fl.* 9), Crates' conversion (*Fl.* 14), Pythagoras' travels (*Fl.* 15), Thales' researches and Protagoras' legacy (*Fl.* 18). Furthermore in this series of portraits, Apuleius also dramatises various moments of crisis in the Platonic development as a philosopher. If Socrates had not recognised the swan in Plato's noble face and innate talent, if his desire for competition had made Plato turn to tragic poetry, if Plato had merely wandered in search of knowledge, like Pythagoras, or if Plato had come to be misunderstood as a tyrant's toady, the future of (Platonic) philosophy would have been in jeopardy. Yet this series of crises in the development of Plato's philosophical identity in his biography, which seem to endanger philosophy itself, are pivotal to recognising philosophy as itself a form of salvation. The crises in Plato's life are actually resolved by philosophical intervention: Socrates' dream highlights the *ingenium* behind Plato's Apolline *nobilitas*, his master's teaching shows Plato a greater glory than that of poetic competition, Plato's unification of philosophy sates his intellectual curiosity and ultimately his teaching of philosophy explains his sojourn in Sicily.⁶² Seeing how philosophy is put in jeopardy by Plato's various crises, but also how it operates as the means by which he is able to overcome them, is one version of the self-fashioning of Apuleius' philosopher-speaker.

The other major problem for understanding the *Florida* as part of Apuleius' Platonism is the nature of the text as a collection of excerpts. While in the *Apologia* we could follow exactly how Apuleius mobilised his Platonism in the dialogue between judge and prosecutor and how it worked for the wider themes of the speech, in the *Florida*, we do not have a single complete speech. Even so, we can track how Apuleius manipulates the 'philosophical situation' of speaking in the theatre in Carthage

⁶² These final two stages are part of Plato's discovery of a philosophical voice, as salvation via philosophy turns into arrogance. Critchley (1999) 134. 'Philosophy cannot say sin, but neither can it say salvation. What philosophy can say is itself, an endless arrogance and arrogation of the voice.'

and his audience in one speech (*Florida* 18) and so this text will benefit from a close reading below.

Yet the Platonic foundation for the drama of the *Florida* is only half of the story. If Apuleius addressed Maximus and educated Aemilianus through a crash course in Plato in the *Apologia*, his target in the *Florida* is much broader in scope. As a performing philosopher, Apuleius' ostensible aim is to educate the people of Carthage and to show them what a real philosopher looks like. In doing so, Apuleius is countering the alter ego of the philosopher: the sophist. *Florida* 18, while also showing the trajectory of the Platonic philosopher's life, dramatises, in contrasting anecdotes, the pedagogic methods of the sophist and the sage. In this way, Apuleius articulates his own philosophical identity and a philosophical message for Carthage.

Anecdotal philosophy

The exemplary narratives of the *Florida* cover an eclectic range of topics, taken from the orator's handbook. There are, however, some exempla that are taken from the history of philosophy and are recounted to specifically delineate Apuleius' philosophical identity, either obliquely or directly, according to the synergy we have found operating throughout his Platonic corpus: (Platonic) *oratio* and (Socratic) *ratio*.⁶³ We are less concerned here with Apuleius' passing references to the caricature of the false-philosophers and their *pallium*, as an extreme of the latter, Socratic model, or with the analogies between the philosopher's discourse and the speech of birds or flight of the eagle, as with the other, Platonic model. Our analysis of these extremes will be restricted to his retelling of the mythic narrative about the contest between Apollo and Marsyas (*Fl.* 3). Instead, the anecdotal narratives of this dichotomy, especially as played out through key characters in the history of philosophy, are where our attention will be focused. The *Florida* does not replay the biography of Plato directly, but mediated through a series of anecdotal narratives

⁶³ On the use of philosophical exempla in the *FL*, see Messina (1999).

about sages (Thales, Pythagoras), sophists (Hippias, Protagoras) and a Cynic (Crates). What each of these narratives has in common is their exemplary force in the speeches, specifically in the biographical detail they contain. Taken together, this collection of exempla offers a cumulative portrait of the philosopher set to replay the drama of the Platonic biography. Plato's pre-philosophical polymathy is the centre of debate in Apuleius' anecdote about the Sophist Hippias (*Fl.* 9). Plato's Pythagorean stage is directly played out in the account of Pythagoras (*Fl.* 15) and expanded in the researches of Thales (*Fl.* 18). Plato's modest material legacy and profound intellectual legacy is reworked through the figure of Crates (*Fl.* 14) and his mythological counterpart Hercules (*Fl.* 22), as well as, in relief, through the figure of Protagoras and his sophistic teaching (*Fl.* 18). But the basic tension of the biography between Plato's inherited *nobilitas* and his conversion to philosophy at the hands of Socrates is reworked in the tale of the contest between the rustic Marsyas and the noble god Apollo (*Fl.* 3).

In the biography of *De Platone*, we saw a tension between Plato's heroic origins (e.g. his Apolline nature) and his conversion in the lap of Socrates. This dynamic is replayed in how the *labor* and *elegantia* that Plato instilled into philosophy becomes the *ratio* and *oratio* of his philosophical body. This tension is dramatised in a unique way in Apuleius' retelling of the story of the competition between Apollo and Marsyas in *Florida* 3.⁶⁴ This excerpt begins with a reference to Hyagnis, the inventor of the pipe, and then proceeds to the well-known musical contest between Apollo and Marsyas, the son and student of Hyagnis. The central section presents a tirade by Marsyas on the appearance and abilities of Apollo (*Fl.* 3.9–12):

contra Apollinem – ridiculum dictu – aduersis uirtutibus culpabat, quod Apollo esset et coma intonsus et genis gratus et corpore glabellus et arte multiscius et fortuna opulentus. 'iam primum,' inquit, 'crines eius praemulsis antiis et promulsis caproneis anteuentuliet propenduli, corpus totum gratissimum, membra nitida, lingua fatidica, seu tute oratione seu uersibus malis,

⁶⁴ For an excellent reading of *Fl.* 3 in terms of Apuleius' cultural identity, see Finkelpearl (2009).

utrubique facundia aequipari. quid quod et uestis textu tenuis, tactu mollis, purpura radians? quid quod et lyra eius auro fulgurat, ebore candicat, gemmis uariegat? quid quod et doctissime et gratissime cantilat?' 'haec omnia,' inquit, 'blandimenta nequaquam uirtuti decora, sed luxuriae accommodata.'

In contrast, ridiculous to say, he blamed Apollo for the opposite virtues: that he was Apollo, he had long hair, pretty cheeks, smoothie body, knew many arts and was wealthy. 'First of all,' he said, 'his hair is smoothed down in locks at the front and slicked forward into forelocks, hanging down and falling freely, his whole body is very pleasant, his limbs are sleek, his tongue prophetic, and, whether you prefer prose or verse, his eloquence is equal in both. What about his clothes, finely woven, soft to touch, shining with purple? What about his lyre, gleaming with gold, shining with ivory, studded with gems? What about his most learned and pleasant singing?' 'All these allurements,' he said, 'are no way becoming for virtue, but are suited to luxury.'

Marsyas' description of Apollo participates in the Roman discourse of *uirtus* through the series of oppositions to *luxuria*.⁶⁵ However, this discourse is placed in the mouth of a figure whose accusations are prefaced as ridiculous, in spite of their obvious force.⁶⁶ Within the contest, owing to this negative portrayal of Marsyas, Apuleius has been seen as appropriating the figure of Apollo in his own self-presentation, and it has been argued that the virtues Marsyas finds fault with are specific terms that Apuleius defended himself against in the *Apologia* and celebrates elsewhere in the *Florida*.⁶⁷ This reading supports the links made between Plato and Apollo via the dream of Socrates in the biography of *De Platone* and also adds to the

⁶⁵ On this rhetoric, see Gleason (1994).

⁶⁶ Somewhat akin to Numanus' speech on Italian hardiness in *Aeneid* Book 9. If Apuleius is indeed participating in the Roman discourse of *uirtus*, such an *exemplum* may not be too far from his mind, especially considering the role of Apolline vengeance in the *Aen.* passage. As *Soc.* proves, Apuleius' philosophical pretensions are powerfully supplemented and supported by both Greek and Latin epic traditions. See, for example, the role of the Nisus and Euryalus episode at *Soc.* 15.150, which not only instigates the discussion of the translation of Socrates' *daimonion* into Latin, but is especially fitting for the general issues of *catabasis* and the journey of the soul in that lecture.

⁶⁷ Harrison (2000) 99 with n. 26 parallels the attacks on personal appearance at *Apol.* 4 and on his eloquence and literary talents at *Apol.* 5–10. Hunink (2001) 77 compares the claims of Apollo's ability in both poetry and birth to similar remarks at *Fl.* 9.27–9 and 18.38.

autobiographical readings of the biography.⁶⁸ It is clear that Plato's depiction as a swan in Socrates' dream represents the conflation of physical beauty with seductive song. This focus on Plato's appearance is therefore potentially challenged via Marsyas' arguments in *Florida* 3, yet Apuleius' ridiculing of the rustic speaker means that this challenge is not a real threat to Plato. Or is it? In reading Marsyas' speech, the two recent commentators disagree on the force of the speaker's rhetoric and whose rhetoric it actually is. Either this is an eloquent speech or a parody of an eloquent speech.⁶⁹ If the suggestion regarding Apuleius' *complete* identification with Apollo is to be correct, a parodic reading of Marsyas' rhetoric seems necessary.⁷⁰ However, if this identification is mediated between the Platonic biography and issues of biographical parallels, there are some added permutations.

To resist absolute identification between Apuleius and Apollo in *Florida* 3 we must not only recall Apuleius' account of Plato's Apolline nature, but also his transposition of Socrates onto Plato. Apuleius thus creates a conception of philosophy that is not only Apolline but also Marsyan, not only Platonic, but also Socratic.⁷¹ Indeed, Socrates has one pivotal appearance in the *Florida* collection, in the excerpt placed directly before the contest of Marsyas and Apollo (*Fl.* 2), in which he tells a beautiful boy to speak so that he can see him (*Fl.* 2.1–2):

⁶⁸ Hijmans (1987) 434, 'when the [biography of Plato] is compared with autobiographical data given elsewhere by Apuleius in his surviving works, its exemplary function becomes obvious'.

⁶⁹ Hunink (2001) 76 refers to the 'striking combination of neologisms' and 'resounding synonyms' while Lee (2005) 72 reads the speech as a 'glaring misuse of both neologism and *adnominatio*'.

⁷⁰ Hunink (2001) 76 compromises, suggesting that, 'It is the thought, rather than the idiom, that marks Marsyas as a fool'. This makes a disturbing distinction between style and content in Apuleius' text.

⁷¹ This is a conception that is itself Platonic in the portrait of Socrates as a Marsyas figure in the *Symposium* (215a–215d). Alcibiades notes that Socrates is not just like Marsyas on account of his physical appearance, but because he can entrance people. Socrates, however, is different in that he can entrance them without an instrument, using just words. On Apuleius' Lucius as an 'anti-Socrates' in terms of his good looks as a reading of Plato's *Symposium* and Socrates as Marsyas, see O'Brien (2002) 40–4. On Socrates' characterisation in the *Symposium* passage in general, see Belfiore (1980).

at non itidem maior meus Socrates, qui cum decorum adolescentem et diutule tacentem conspicatus foret, ‘ut te uideam’, inquit, ‘aliquid et loquere.’ scilicet Socrates tacentem hominem non uidebat; etenim arbitrabatur homines non oculorum, sed mentis acie et animi obtutu considerandos.

But not so my superior, Socrates, who, when he would see a handsome young man that had stayed silent, even for a small amount of time, would say, ‘So that I may see you, say something.’ Clearly Socrates could not see a silent man, since he thought that men must be examined not with the eyes, but the vision of the mind and the gaze of the soul.

Here Apuleius transfers expressions of physical sight (*acies oculorum*; *obtutus oculorum*) onto the mind and the soul. While *acies mentis* is found in Plautus to describe insightful perception, the phrase *obtutus animi* intimates the Platonic distinction between sensible and intelligible perception and, perhaps, specifically the image in the *Phaedrus* of the soul’s encounter with the transcendental Forms.⁷² This transfer of the expression of physical sight to philosophical insight is further enacted by the transition from how the boy is seen (*conspicatus*) by Socrates to how men in general are to be ‘examined’ (*considerandos*) by the philosopher. Plato’s Socrates saw physical beauty as a complement to the beauty of the soul.⁷³ In this passage, a specific link has been made with Plato’s *Charmides*.⁷⁴ This link can be taken further with the passage of Socrates seeing Plato’s *ingenium* from his *facies* in *De Platone*. In the *Charmides* (154d–e), on seeing Charmides, Socrates is asked if he thinks that he has a fine face. Socrates agrees, and then Chaerephon says if he stripped he would seem as if he has no face because he has such perfect form. Socrates then asks if he has a good soul and proposes that they should strip him down to that first, and the way to do this is through discussion.⁷⁵ In the Platonic biography of *De Platone* the reference to seeing Plato the ‘boy’ (*puer*) and divining his ‘internal disposition’ (*intimum ingenium*) ‘from his external appearance’

⁷² The contrast between the sensible visibility of heavenly bodies and the access to the higher deities only through intelligible comprehension is present in *Soc.* 4.128.

⁷³ See Blondell (2002) 71 with n. 82 for references.

⁷⁴ Harrison (2000) 96. Apuleius quotes from this dialogue at *Apol.* 26.4 (*Charm.* 157a).

⁷⁵ This is also the sentiment behind the reference to Socrates on the use of mirrors at *Apol.* 15.4–7.

(*exteriore...facie*) presages the figure of the cygnet of the dream.⁷⁶ However, the fact that Socrates understands the maturation of the cygnet into swan in terms of the swan-song shows that what Socrates is actually seeing is Plato's soul through his speech. This corresponds to the form and speech of Socrates as Marsyas. Thus Socrates sees Plato, sees beyond his noble face to his internal quality.⁷⁷ This conclusion borders on the trite moral behind the 'surface versus substance' dichotomy.⁷⁸ Furthermore, we seem far removed from Plato's Apolline nature and Apuleius' own position with regard to his showy virtues. As with the issue of Plato's name, the issue of the *corpus* of philosophy proves decisive. After Marsyas' speech, Apuleius makes the following comment (*Fl.* 3.13):

contra corporis sui qualitatem prae se maximam speciem ostentare.

In contrast, the quality of his own body paraded the greatest image of his bragging.

On one level, this aside is a sarcastic comment by Apuleius on how fine Marsyas' grotesque body, which was previously described (*Fl.* 3.8), is compared to the godly form of Apollo. Yet another interpretation has Marsyas using his own body as an extension of his argument against Apollo's lack of virtue. In this latter reading, as with the model of Socratic vision, Marsyas' 'quality of body' (*corporis...qualitatem*) proves to be the 'greatest image' (*maximam speciem*) of his argument. So the trajectory of Socrates' young man is reversed, in which speaking reveals the beauty of the boy, whereas for Marsyas, his

⁷⁶ Plato's *intimum ingenium* is a reference to his *genius*, which Apuleius describes as an *intimus cognitor* at *Soc.* 16.156.

⁷⁷ Compare *Pl.* 2.22.251, which O'Brien (2002) 40–1 quotes in relation to Lucius' *probitas* at *Met.* 2.2.

⁷⁸ Mason (1983) 143, 'The moral may be a trite one, but it shows that the *Golden Ass* is not as different from Apuleius' other works as it may seem.' The triteness is catching since Mason quotes Tatum (1979) 124, on *Fl.* 14, about Crates and the moral 'that Apuleius' listeners should learn to look beyond the surface appearances to an underlying reality'. This same moral is taken over by Keulen (2003) 115, 'It seems that Apuleius regarded Crates not without sympathy, using the example of Cynic morality to teach his listeners to look beyond surface appearances to underlying values that really matter. As Tatum...suggested, this might be illustrative of how Apuleius' comic fiction works.'

body is the basis for his critique of Apollo. The duality in the phrase *maxima species*, as either the speaker's sarcasm ('greatest attractiveness') or an illustration of Marsyas' argument ('greatest image'), neatly captures the ambivalence of Apuleius' presentation of Marsyas. In fact, the duality of *species* enacts the image of the *corpus* of philosophy in *De Platone*, which Plato filed down with reason and also dressed up to present 'the most handsome appearance' (*honestissimam speciem*) (*Pl.* 1.3.188).⁷⁹ Beyond nobility, inner talent, Socratic vision, and the other tensions in Plato's birth and origins, it is the *form* of the Platonic *corpus* that creates philosophy.

The Marsyas/Apollo antithesis acts as a mythologised delineation of the tension within Apuleius' take on Platonic philosophy, which is dramatised in other ways in anecdotal narratives in the *Florida* collection. Apollo's polymathy and Plato's polymathic intellectual activities before his philosophical conversion reappear in the account of the sophist Hippias (*Fl.* 9) and his polymathic self-fashioning, only to be redirected towards Apuleius' literary creativity. A comparable expansive scope of learning is played out in the philosophical adventures of Pythagoras (*Fl.* 15). Marsyas' poverty and outspoken critique are re-enacted through the modest material, but rich intellectual legacies of Crates (*Florida* 14, 22), as a philosophical Hercules. Yet the duality of Marsyas/Apollo is most clearly evoked in the extended speech: *Florida* 18. There Apuleius juxtaposes the question of eloquence and education in terms of the sophists Protagoras and Euathlus, with the question of intellectual modesty in the anecdote about Thales.

Florida 9 is one of the longest surviving fragments of Apuleius' orations and, unlike the Apollo/Marsyas competition, one where we can reconstruct the rationale for its telling.⁸⁰ The anecdote about Hippias not only explains why Apuleius' literary productions are given such scrutiny by his audience (both his detractors and his fans), but also expands into a praise

⁷⁹ Compare the *Apol.* passage on the bodily charm of philosophers, 'embellished by character' (*morum honestamentis*, *Apol.* 4.9).

⁸⁰ On the place of *Fl.* 9 in the collection, see Lee (2005) 96–101.

of the imitation of the proconsul, Severianus, by his son, Honorinus, in depicting and representing his father's virtues (*Fl.* 9.41).⁸¹ Within this narrative the specific issue of the philosopher arises in terms of the setting ('in the auditorium of a philosopher', *in auditorio philosophi*, *Fl.* 9.4), the type of literary production ('praised dialogues of the philosopher', *dialogos laudatos philosophi* *Fl.* 9.28) and the lessons of philosophy in general ('philosophy has taught me', *philosophia me docuit*, *Fl.* 9.33). Thus, we would anticipate the exemplary anecdote to not only serve the specific means of the speech, but also how such means pertain to the philosopher-speaker. Apuleius introduces Hippias through a specific analogy between his literary production and Hippias' material production as follows (*Fl.* 9.14):

plura enim mea exstant in Camenis quam Hippias in opificiis opera. quid istud sit, si animo attendatis, diligentius et accuratius disputabo.

For there are more works of mine in Literature than there are works of Hippias in his workshops. What that means, if you'd pay close attention, I will discuss with greater diligence and accuracy.

The anecdote then begins with a potted biographical sketch of Hippias (*Fl.* 9.15):

et Hippias e numero sophistarum est, artium multitudine prior omnibus, eloquentia nulli secundus; aetas illi cum Socrate, patria Elis; genus ignoratur, gloria uero magna, fortuna modica, sed ingenium nobile, memoria excellens, studia uaria, aemuli multi.⁸²

Hippias was one of the sophists, and in the multitude of his talents he was pre-eminent, while in eloquence he was second to none; he was a contemporary of Socrates, and his homeland was Elis; of unknown ancestry, but his fame was great; his fortune modest, but his talent was noble; he had an excellent memory, varied interests, many rivals.

After an extended *ekphrasis* of Hippias' self-made attire that he wore during a visit to Pisa at the time of the Olympics (*Fl.* 9.16–23), Apuleius concludes (*Fl.* 9.24):

⁸¹ Lee (2005) 96–7.

⁸² Lee (2005) 105–6 compares Alexander in *Fl.* 7 in terms of ideas of glory, emulation and *ingenium*. Also compare Philemon in *Fl.* 16, 5–6, where the topic of *ingenium*, while not part of Philemon's biography, is referenced as a way of segueing into the anecdote.

quis autem non laudabit hominem tam numerosa arte multiscium, totiugi scientia magnificum, tot utensilium peritia daedalum? quin et ipse Hippias laudo, sed ingenii eius fecunditatem malo doctrinae quam supellectilis multiformi instrumento aemulari.

Who will not praise a multi-disciplinary genius with so much talent, titanic in panoramic knowledge, and Daedalus-like in his skill with so many tools? I indeed praise Hippias, but I would prefer to emulate his prolific talent for its learning rather than the paraphernalia's multifarious array.

Apuleius proceeds to enumerate his inadequacies in the 'manufacturing arts' compared with his abilities in writing 'with a single reed'. In spite of Apuleius' pointedly comic presentation of Hippias, more often than not it has been read as a positive comparison between Apuleian and sophistic polymathy corresponding to the figure of Apollo in *Fl.* 3. Yet, when Hippias' *ingenium* and his (pre-philosophical) desire to compete is read in relation to comparable traits in the youthful Plato before Socrates' intervention, we can see why Apuleius distances himself from the sophist here.⁸³ Apuleius' selection of Hippias' *ingenium* mirrors Socrates' dream-come-true when he sees the *intimum ingenium* of the young Plato in his appearance. The redirection of the sophist for philosophical aims is also followed up at the end of the speech to show a productive mimesis of son to father in the office of the proconsul.

Polymathy is not merely an issue for Plato's pre-Socratic studies. After Socrates' death, his thirst for knowledge sends him around the world. This is part of the portrait of Pythagoras in *Florida* 15. Close connections between the Platonic biography and *Florida* 15 have been clearly noted.⁸⁴ In general, readers of both Apuleian passages replay the general connection

⁸³ This distancing is also supplemented by seeing this passage as a generally Platonic characterisation of the sophist and an explicit reworking of Plato's *Hippias Minor*. For the role of Hippias in the latter, see Blondell (2002) 113–64. Marangoni (2000) 22–3 shows how Hippias' bragging about his handiwork in *Hippias Minor* 368b–f is expanded in Apuleius' narrative. While I agree with Lee (2005) 97 that 'Apuleius converts Hippias' bragging about many genres of writing into his own claim', I cannot see how this is done without the irony of the Platonic characterisation, as claimed by Hunink (2001) 104 n. 2.

⁸⁴ Schmutzler (1974) 100–1, Sandy (1997) 187, 'Plato deviated scarcely at all from Pythagorean doctrine' with n. 29, comparing *Pl.* 1.3.186–7 with *Fl.* 15.26, Lee (2005) 135.

between (Neo)Platonism and (Neo)Pythagoreanism, without reading their differences in Apuleius' two texts.⁸⁵ Plato's travels after Socrates' death are not only presented as the philosopher's attempt to learn *Pythagorae disciplinam*, but also are in themselves Pythagorean.⁸⁶ While there are clear connections between Plato's itinerary and Pythagoras' exilic journeying in *Florida* 15 (14–21), there are also subtle differences.

We are told that both travelled to Egypt. In *Florida* 15, Apuleius gives two accounts of Pythagoras' Egyptian phase. He begins by stating that 'some say' (*sunt qui... aiant*) Pythagoras was taken to Egypt as a captive of King Cambyses, where he had the Persian magi for teachers, especially the high priest Zoroaster. But the 'more famous story' (*celebrior fama*) is that 'he sought Egyptian learning of his own accord' (*sponte eum petisse Aegyptias disciplinas*). In Egypt 'he was taught by the priests' (*a sacerdotibus... didicisse*) about the 'incredible powers of their rituals' (*caerimoniarum incredundas potentias*), the 'wonderful properties of numbers' (*numerorum admirandas uices*) and the 'ingenious theorems of geometry' (*geometriae sollertissimas formulas*). This has been read as paralleling Plato's journey to Egypt, where 'he went to seek Egyptian astrology and learn of the rites from the prophets there' (*est profectus et astrologiam adusque Aegyptum iuit petitem, ut inde prophetarum etiam ritus addiceret*). While the essential formula of seeking wisdom in Egypt is comparable, what Pythagoras and Plato sought is very different. The main correspondence is learning religious rites (*caerimoniarum incredundas potentias ~ ritus*) from priests/prophets (*a sacerdotibus ~ inde prophetarum*). However, Plato's search for astrology in Egypt was sought by Pythagoras among the Chaldeans (*Chaldaei sideralem scientiam... ostendere*), while the geometry

⁸⁵ Moreschini (1978) 126, Messina (1999) 287–9, Lee (2005) 135–8.

⁸⁶ There is an intriguing parallel in the biography of Pythagoras, in his immediate reasons for fleeing Samos, aside from the tyranny (*Fl.* 15.13). The reference to Pythagoras' father in this passage not only parallels Plato's journeying after the death of Socrates, but sets up a tension between father and son, teacher and pupil, based on forms of knowledge and skill. Apuleius admits that he has just discovered these biographical details and appreciates the irony of Pythagoras' father resembling the sophist Hippias and his artistic endeavours (*Fl.* 9.25).

sought by Pythagoras in Egypt was sought by Plato in Cyrene under Theodorus (*ad Theodorum Cyrenas, ut geometriam disceret*).

These differences may not seem important for Apuleius' general model of philosophical journeying, but they do show how the philosophers' respective intentions for travelling are marked by Apuleius as subtly distinct. Pythagoras was 'not satisfied in his mind with these (i.e. Egyptian) arts' (*nec his artibus animi expletum*), so he went further afield.⁸⁷ Plato, on the other hand, went to Cyrene, Egypt, back to Italy, and would have gone further, not because of a lack of satisfaction, but 'because he perceived that the genius of the Pythagoreans was aided by other disciplines' (*quod Pythagoreorum ingenium adiutum disciplinis aliis sentiebat*). Thus, Pythagoras' travels for knowledge were to get his fill of various forms of knowledge (*nec... expletum*), but for Plato they were to aid (*adiutum*) Pythagorean *ingenium*. So, while Pythagoras' thirst for learning made Plato travel afar, the latter's travels were specifically based on the Pythagorean principles of 'continence and chastity that he desired to imitate' in the former (*continentiam et castitatem magis cupiebat imitari*). Indeed, this aspect of Pythagoreanism is brought to bear on Pythagoras himself in the *Florida* passage (*Fl.* 15.22–3):

tot ille doctoribus eruditus, tot tamque multiugis calicibus disciplinarum toto orbe haustis, uir praesertim ingenio ingenti ac profecto super captum hominis animi augustior, primus philosophiae nuncupator et conditor, nihil prius discipulos suos docuit quam tacere, primumque apud eum meditatio sapienti futuro linguam omnem coercere, uerbaque, quae uolantia poetae appellant, ea uerba detractis pinnis intra murum candentium dentium premere.

Educated by so many teachers, after draining so many and such manifold cups of wisdom from the whole world, that man of prodigious innate talent and venerable beyond the capacity of the human soul, who was the first to name and found philosophy, taught his students nothing before teaching them to be silent, and the first lesson for a future wise man was to completely hold his tongue, and words, which the poets call 'winged', to check those words, with wings clipped, within the wall of the white teeth.

⁸⁷ The combination of *expletum* ('satisfied') with the genitive *animi* is one of several in Apuleius. See Hunink (2001) 147.

This emphasis on Pythagorean silence makes an explicit contrast between Pythagoras' boundless travels after exile and the bounds of speech, especially when Apuleius follows up with a comment about the punishment of a talkative student as a kind of 'vocal exile' (*exsilio uocis*, *Fl.* 15.25). Yet, there is a tension between such philosophical silence and the boundless thirst for knowledge elsewhere in the Apuleian corpus: Demosthenes had 'imbibed' (*haurisset*, *Apol.* 15.9) eloquence from Plato, while Apuleius refers to the wine-cup metaphor to describe his own learning in Athens (*Fl.* 20.4). In the latter, the positive reference to the 'bottomless cup of universal philosophy' (*uniuersae philosophiae inexplebilem*, *Fl.* 20.4) may be juxtaposed with use of the same metaphor several times in the ethical, second book of *De Platone* as a dangerous aspect of unquenchable desire.⁸⁸ It is within this ambiguous context of both intellectual indulgence and restraint that we must read the conclusion of *Florida* 15 and the specific link between Plato and Pythagoras claimed there (*Fl.* 15.26–7):

porro noster Plato, nihil ab hac secta uel paululum deuius, pythagorissat in plurimis. aequè et ipse ut in nomen eius a magistris meis adoptarer, utrumque meditationibus Academicis didici, et, cum dicto opus est, impigre dicere, et, cum tacito opus est, libenter tacere. qua moderatione uideor ab omnibus tuis antecessoribus haud minus opportuni silentii laudem quam tempestiuae uocis testimonium consecutus.

Furthermore our Plato, who deviated not at all (or at least very little) from that sect, Pythagorised in most matters. In the same way, in order to be adopted into his name by my teachers, I too learned in my studies at the Academy both, when speech was required, to speak readily, and, when silence was required, to keep silent willingly. By such moderation I seem to have gained from all of your predecessors praise for opportune silence, no less than in witness for timely voice.

Apuleius claims that he follows Plato's appropriation of the Pythagorean principle of silence, although he is praised by Carthage also for his timely speech. The juxtaposition between silence and speech, Pythagorean abstinence and thirst for knowledge is made succinctly in the phrase *libenter tacere*. Both

⁸⁸ *Pl.* 2.4.226–7 and *Pl.* 2.16.243.

‘voice’ and ‘silence’ are related to exile and political tyranny, since, before finally capping the account with his own example (and ‘timely witness’), the whole of *Florida* 15 works through the mistake of thinking that Pythagoras was a tyrant’s beloved rather than a forced exile from Samos. Likewise Plato’s travels end in Sicily, and are clouded by his relationship with Dionysius.⁸⁹

The lesson of Pythagorean silence is one that adheres to the final manifestation of the polymathic, Apolline traits of the philosopher sketched by another exemplary anecdote in the *Florida*: the teaching of Euathlus by the sophist Protagoras in *Florida* 18. Protagoras is introduced as follows (*Fl.* 18.19):

Protagora, qui sophista fuit longe multiscius et cum primis rhetoricae reperi-
toribus perfacundus, Democriti physici cuius aequaeuus – inde ei suppeditata
doctrina est.

Protagoras was a sophist extremely knowledgeable in many areas and for supreme eloquence up with the first founders of rhetoric, a contemporary and fellow countryman of the natural philosopher Democritus, who furnished him with his doctrines.

This very brief biographical sketch offers three significant pieces of information about Protagoras: his identification as a sophist; his role as one of the inventors of rhetoric; and his relationship with his fellow-citizen Democritus as the source of his doctrines. Most attention has been paid to his role as a sophist, especially in matching Apuleius’ own sophistic tendencies, but also to the link between the adjective *multiscius* as used of various figures elsewhere in the corpus.⁹⁰ But as with Hippias, the other sophist used as an exemplary model in the *Florida*, the narrative of sophistic teaching is reworked into a different focus for the philosopher. After narrating the paradox of the ‘fee’ (*merces*) of Protagoras, Apuleius complains about the thorny arguments of the sophists and states that he does not

⁸⁹ There are interesting discussions in the Platonic *Epistles* of the issue of silence over doctrine, *Ep.* 2 and *Ep.* 7.341d especially.

⁹⁰ The term is used of the sophist Hippias (*Fl.* 9.24), as well as of Homer (*Apol.* 31.5), and Ulysses (*Met.* 9.13) which not only acknowledges the close connection between sophists and poets in Classical Athenian culture, but also the paradigmatic figure of Ulysses in Platonic debates of Homeric heroic virtues, for example, *Hippias Minor*.

want to pay Carthage the *merces* of Protagoras the sophist, but that of Thales the sage (*sapiens*).

Apuleius' preference of a payment in wisdom and not the sophist's fee corresponds to the emphasis on poverty within the Marsyan, Socratic side of Apuleius' (Platonic) philosophy. The main anecdotes that Apuleius uses to exemplify this side of the philosopher belong to the Cynic Crates (*Fl.* 14 and 22). If Hippias dramatises the problem of Plato's pre-philosophical polymathy and Pythagoras that of insatiable philosophical searching, the passages that deal with Crates focus more on the question of material and intellectual legacy. In *Florida* 14, Crates' conversion to Cynicism is followed by his marriage to Hipparche. When proposing to her, Crates shows her his hunchback and that he has no possessions apart from his sack and cloak. After giving the offer careful consideration, she responds as follows (*Fl.* 14.5):

iam dudum sibi prouisum satis et satis consultum respondit, neque ditio-
rem maritum neque formosiores usquam gentium posse inuenire; proinde duc-
eret, quo liberet.

She responded that, after giving the matter sufficient consideration, she had reached an equally sufficient verdict, namely that she was not able to find a richer nor more handsome husband anywhere among mankind; so he should lead her where he pleased.

Crates' display of poverty is itself held up as a persuasive tenet of Cynicism and is the basis for the analogy between the Cynic and the mythological figure of Hercules in *Florida* 22. After this comparison, once again Apuleius focuses on Crates' choice of poverty, in spite of his wealthy background, as a philosophical virtue (*Fl.* 22.6):

post ubi intellegit nullum sibi in re familiari praesidium legatum, quo fretus
aetatem agat, omnia fluxa infirmaque esse, quicquid sub caelo diuitiarum est,
eas omnis ad bene uiuendum nihil quicquam esse . . .

Afterwards, when he understood that the familial wealth he had inherited offered no means of support to live his life on, that everything is in flux and unstable, and whatever wealth there is under heaven, it is of no use whatsoever for living well . . .

That is where the excerpt breaks off, but we can see the parallels between Crates' conversion and Hipparche's choice in *Florida* 14. With the anecdote about Thales, used in *Florida* 18 to counter the polymathic sophist Protagoras, Apuleius extends this virtue of poverty to the matter of philosophical and scientific method (*Fl.* 18.30–2):

Thales Milesius ex septem illis sapientiae memoratis uiris facile praecipuus – enim geometriae penes Graios primus repertor et naturae rerum certissimus explorator et astrorum peritissimus contemplator – maximas res paruis lineis repperit.

Milesian Thales, easily the chief of those legendary Seven Sages – as the first to discover geometry among the Greeks, the surest investigator into the nature of things and the most practised observer of the stars – through tiny diagrams discovered immense realities.

Apuleius then lists an extensive range of earthly and celestial phenomena, from the changes in the seasons to the famously predicted eclipse, all of them based on the modest science of geometry. We may compare Protagoras' founding role as among the first founders of rhetorical science, but otherwise Thales' method is far removed from sophistic polymathy, and grounded instead in a sufficiently successful method. In fact, the move from Protagoras to Thales mirrors that from Hippias to Apuleius in terms of the modest means of the 'single papyrus reed' (*unus chartarius calamus*, *Fl.* 9.27). In turn, just as in the Hippias comparison Apuleius describes his literary production as issuing from that one pen, Thales extrapolated his great scientific discoveries from his 'tiny diagrams' (*paruis lineis*).

Furthermore, Apuleius uses Thales, as he does Crates but not Hippias or Protagoras, to emphasise issues of philosophical legacy. In the anecdote, Thales encounters a prince, who asks what 'payment' (*merces*) the philosopher wants for sharing his researches. He answers that all he wants is to be recognised as the originator of his own ideas. Apuleius praises the *merces* of Thales as timeless because he is still paying it to this day by following in his researches.

Finally, the anecdotes of Crates and Thales accord in their treatment of modest means and profound intellectual legacies

with the aspects of the philosopher emphasised at the end of the biography of Plato in *De Platone*. Not only is Plato's modest legacy discussed, but also the success of his students in his philosophy and, ultimately, his re-creation of philosophy's *corpus* itself. Thus, while the *exemplum* of Pythagoras is the only explicitly 'Platonic' case-study of the *Florida* that chimes with the biography of *De Platone*, the dynamic between Marsyas and Apollo enacts the two sides of Plato's trajectory. These sides are most radically juxtaposed in the distinction between the philosopher and the sophist. With a reading of *Florida* 18 and the issue of the *merces* of philosophy, we shall now examine more closely how the sophist is characterised by Apuleius as philosophy's other.

The sophist and the sage: philosophising Carthage

The incessant exemplarity of the *Florida* is as much a part of the problem of reading this rattle-bag collection of excerpts as it is of delineating the role of the philosopher speaker. Unlike the focused and extended narrative of the *Apologia*, mixing Platonic citation and exegesis with philosophising exempla and re-enacting such Platonising into a family drama, the *Florida* offers up snatches of the total speech delivered in a cumulative mosaic of improvisatory mobilisation of philosophising credos, whatever the weather. The speaker on each occasion must display what it is to become a philosopher and dispense (Platonic) philosophy: Platonising *ex tempore*. Worst of all, those crystalline moments of telling us what philosophical discourse is (e.g. *Fl.* 13) and what you are listening to (*Fl.* 5), are for the most part cruelly severed from the narratives they were induced by. Even so, there are excerpts in which we do have frameworks to work with. Of these, *Florida* 18 offers the most comprehensive insight into how Apuleius imagines his role as a philosopher in terms of anecdotal narratives. The tales of Protagoras and Thales enact a defence of philosophy as oratorical pedagogy. As with the back and forth of focalisation of Maximus and Aemilianus through *philosophica* in the trial of the *Apologia*, the way in which this narrative focalises its audience needs to be

analysed through every twist and turn. We will see how the two poles of refined Platonic philosophy and rudimentary education are played off one another, but this time as explicit features of the speaker's autobiography. Yet the lesson itself is framed within a sophistic narrative of payment for education and Apuleius must discourse on this specifically sophistic topic to show his audience what a philosopher is. However, *Florida* 18 not only delineates the making of the philosopher, it also projects onto the audience the stages of the Platonic philosopher's development. The context of the theatre and the range of entertainments found there signpost the youthful polymathy of the emergent philosopher, while the clinching conversion is enacted by the familiar synergy of *ratio et oratio*. The audience is then offered a scene explicating predecessors and influences on this self-professed philosopher (Protagoras and Thales). Finally, the philosopher graduates from explanation to explication with the dual-action Socratic/Platonic bilingual hymn and dialogue. Still more importantly, *Florida* 18 offers a definition of the philosopher in terms of his distance from the figure of the sophist. In *Florida* 18 Apuleius' 'payment' of Carthage for his education by his own lesson is set up in sophistic terms. Yet his exemplary portraits of the sophist Protagoras and his pupil Euathlus are set to distance him from sophistic activity.

After a description of what the audience should expect when listening to a philosopher in the problematic context of a theatre, the speaker relates several autobiographical details about his education and development and the role of Carthage in this. He then proceeds to narrate two contrasting anecdotes about the sophist Protagoras and the sage Thales to articulate the type of payment he will be offering Carthage. He explains that he will not be paying them the *merces* that the sophist Protagoras demanded from his student Euathlus, but did not receive, but that which the sage Thales did not demand, yet did receive from the prince Mandraytus of Priene. On defining the type of *merces* he will pay, he then proceeds to one particular aspect of Carthaginian culture he will praise: her religious institutions. Henceforth, he says, he will praise the god Aesculapius with

two literary creations: a hymn and a dialogue. The extract as we have it ends with a tantalising introduction of this bilingual dialogue between two of Apuleius' friends. At each stage of the speech Apuleius maintains a dynamic between his identity as a philosopher and his audience, both within the particular event of the speech in the theatre and in terms of his education in Carthage. In what follows, we shall read *Florida* 18 in terms of this dynamic and bring out the internal logic of the face-off between philosopher and sophist in terms of appropriate payment for education.

At the opening of the speech, Apuleius configures his philosophical identity as complementary to, and even dependent upon, his audience and their own learning (*Fl.* 18.1):

tanta multitudo ad audiendum conuenistis, ut potius gratulari Carthagini debeam, quod tam multos eruditionis amicos habet, quam excusare, quod philosophus non recusauerim dissertare.

You have assembled in such a great crowd to hear me that I ought rather to congratulate Carthage for having so many friends of learning, than make excuses for not, *qua* philosopher, refusing to lecture.

Note the neat balance between Apuleius' plea for excuses (*excusare*) and apologetic (*re-cusauerim*) philosophising and how once again we have that filing down and dressing up synergy of *ratio* and *oratio* caught up in this *captatio benevolentiae*. In addition, as we will see, this balanced articulation of Apuleius' identity in terms of the audience is set in opposition to various other competing identities and performances to point to a constructing of philosophical discourse. But the exchange between speaker and audience continues with an account of the location of the event. Just as the speaker says that he 'ought' (*debeam*) to praise the learning of the Carthaginians rather than make excuses, as a philosopher, for public speaking, the Carthaginian audience is told what they 'ought' (*debet*) to pay attention to when in the theatre. They should not pay attention to its physical layout, nor the various performers and entertainments on show, including tragic and poetic drama: instead they should pay attention to the *ratio* of the gathered audience and the *oratio* of the person speaking. The climax to the extended

description of the theatre and its typical performances glosses the situation we found in *Florida* 5. As I have already noted, elsewhere in the *Florida* Apuleius compares the voices of various birds to that of the philosopher (*Florida* 13). In that passage the speech of the philosopher, his *ratio* and *oratio*, are joined, while in *Florida* 18 the *ratio* of the audience is separated from the *oratio* of the speaker.⁹¹ The philosopher's discourse is split between speaker and audience, preparing us for the central theme of exchange.

But this is *theatre*. The way in which the speaker's *oratio* is established as that of the philosopher is potentially compromised through comparison with the *oratio* of other theatrical authorities: the tragic and comic poets. This instigates another crisis for the construction of the philosopher's identity in the theatre, since the call for the audience not to pay attention to the theatrical surrounding is not unique to the philosopher, but is a ploy adopted by poets of the theatre, who can also use their *oratio* to fabricate faraway places. But the philosopher will not be substituting the theatre in Carthage for some famous site of Hellenic cultural significance, instead he will present buildings of political and cultural importance within Carthage: the senate house and library.⁹² Unlike the *oratio* of other translators and inheritors of Hellenic culture, such as tragic and comic playwrights, this local philosopher will literally put Carthage on the map. Furthermore, the relationship between the *curia* and *dignitas* and the *bibliotheca* and *eruditio* directly links the speech with the substituted place, and, thus, by extension, the philosopher's *oratio* with these places and their effect on the audience, through chiasmic reference back to the beginning of the speech, and the erudition and dignity of the audience. Athens acts as a supplement to Carthage and not a Plautine

⁹¹ This separation has meant that the phrase *conuenientium ratio* has been translated and interpreted as inferring the audience's motivation (Lee (2001) 370, 'this *ratio* is the audience's, and so must represent the "reason" the audience has assembled'). Lee (2005) 171, 'this *ratio* belongs to the audience, and so underscores the didactic function of Apuleius' oration'.

⁹² Lee (2005) 171.

replacement. The exchange between speaker and audience is thus an 'embedded' transaction. If, according to Nightingale, 'as foreigners, the sophists were by definition engaging in transactions that were not embedded in Athenian social and political relationships'⁹³ – utilising the language of embedded and disembedded forms of economies – this Platonic philosopher uses such embeddedness to make his case for his identity.

This claim is at once challenged when Apuleius continues his speech with a reference to a further sophistic trope. But before we get there, I should summarise the argument so far. Apuleius' philosophical identity and philosophical discourse are constructed out of oppositions to rhetorical and poetic genres. These non-philosophical modes are not, however, excluded from the articulation of the philosopher's identity, but are incorporated into the philosopher's armoury in his *logos*. Here the fusion of speaker and audience is key – what the speaker 'ought' to do and how the audience 'ought' to respond, in a seemingly sophistic situation of a philosopher holding forth in a theatrical venue: the redoubled use of *debeo* lays the way for the figure of the *merces* ('payment') to come in the next part of the speech. After an extended autobiographical narrative dealing with his education in Carthage and Athens, Apuleius refers to the *merces* he owes the Carthaginians for being his parents and first teachers. Within this autobiographical narrative, Apuleius makes a clear statement regarding his role as an itinerant speaker when he remarks, 'I have often debated most readily among strangers'. Rather than a biographical fact of Apuleius' sophistic identity, when read after the opening construction of philosophical discourse, as well as alongside other autobiographical statements in the speech, its biographical reliability becomes questionable and is transformed into a significant moment both in the rhetorical context of the speech and also as a pivotal moment in Apuleius' self-fashioning of his philosophical identity.

⁹³ Nightingale (1995) 22.

After mentioning the (un)imagined settings of the senate house and the library, the speech returns to its opening focus on the ‘greatness’ – size, dignity and erudition – of the audience. The plea for excuses of the opening section also returns, with a parallel plea of incompetence: the speaker’s *oratio* is deficient in comparison with his audience. The speaker then explains he knows from experience that his speech is deficient for a specific reason: he is speaking before his own citizens. Amazingly, in spite of all the enticements and encouragements that his citizens have bestowed on him while among them, he is held back through reverence towards them. It is specifically at this point that Apuleius explains his ‘away’ speaking, thereby effecting the juxtaposition between his reluctance among his current, ‘home’ audience (*penes meos*) and his readiness to speak ‘among outsiders’ (*penes extrarios*). Thus the discrepancy between Apuleius’ ability to speak readily among outsiders and among his own citizens is a variation on the plea for incompetence for the deficiency of the present *oratio*. Just as a copious speech was meant to ‘give backing’ (*suppeteret*) to the greatness of his audience, the audience’s encouragements are meant to ‘give backing’ (*suppetunt*) to the speaker himself. Both speaker and audience share ‘hearth and home’ (*lar*), ‘boyhood studies’ (*pueritia*), ‘teachers’ (*magistri*), ‘(philosophical) training’ (*secta*), as they heard his ‘voice’ (*uox*) and approved his ‘books’ (*libri*). The autobiographical details are then reiterated, with telling expansions of detail, and the *patria* picks up the reference to the *lars*.⁹⁴ The *uox* is then described as bilingual and his *libri* are praised at home more than abroad. However, the most compelling expansion is the reference to Athens as the place in which Apuleius’ boyhood philosophical studies (*secta*) were confirmed, after being started (*incohata*) in Africa Proconsularis.

This reference to Athens has been at the centre of debate on the specifics of Apuleius’ philosophical affiliation, giving

⁹⁴ Hunink (2001) 186, although assuming that *patria* is foreshadowed in *nec lare alienus*. On *lar* as synonym for ‘home’, see Lee (2005) 173, who compares *Met.* 9.24 and 9.31.

rise to conjectures about when he was in Athens, who he studied with and what brand of philosophy he studied. Yet one reason why excerpting biographical facts from this speech is dangerous is that both the account of sophistic external speaking and Athenian philosophical education are introduced in the context of praising and paying Carthage. They are also part of the fashioning of Apuleius' philosophical identity. For the immediate Carthaginian audience, Apuleius' philosophical training must be underplayed and only introduced as a supplement to the foundation of his local education among them. For readers intent on looking for Apuleius' philosophical affiliations, the Carthaginian context of the oblique reference to Athens must be finessed.

Thus, to resume our argument, the autobiographical detail of sophistic itinerant speaking is appropriated within, and is very much part of, the topic of the speech: the payment of the *merces* to Carthage. Apuleius proceeds to describe which payment he will honour with references to the *sophista* Protagoras and the *sapiens* Thales. Where the *locus* of the theatre called for referencing his relationship to the *comicus* Plautus and the unnamed *tragicus*, the issue of pedagogic payment becomes finessed by a *sophista* and a *sapiens*. Moreover, as with the poets, the fact that Apuleius tells his audience that Protagoras is a *sophista* and Thales a *sapiens* must be negotiated in terms of his opening identification as a *philosophus*.⁹⁵ To add to this problematic of identity, the whole issue of the *merces* for teaching is itself one of sophistic education.⁹⁶ Even if Apuleius does distance himself from the specific *merces* that Protagoras asked for but did not receive, it is still a self-consciously sophistic motif to pay for teaching. Furthermore, Apuleius' practice of narrating the stories for both *mercedes* – the one he will not pay the Carthaginians and the one that he will – could even appear to be broadly

⁹⁵ See below for the significance of Democritus *physicus* for Protagoras' biography and beyond.

⁹⁶ The *misthus* is referred to in relation to sophists in general in Plato and of Protagoras in particular: *Theaet.* 161e, *Protag.* 311b. On the fee of the sophist in general, see Blank (1985). Varro has various etymologies for *merces*, though he chiefly has it from *merere*, 'to earn'.

Protagorean in the function of its relativism: i.e. whenever a sentence is asserted, its negation can also be asserted. Yet the closer Apuleius gets to the figure of the sophist, the more violently he distances himself in the ultimate philosophical move: the change from sophistic payment to philosophical debt.

First, let me briefly summarise the anecdotes. After the sketch of his biography (to which I'll return), Apuleius describes how Protagoras demanded an 'excessively fat fee' (*mercedem nimis uberem*) from his student Euathlus, based on a rash condition that he should only pay him the money once he had won his first case in the 'presence of judges' (*penes iudices*). Euathlus, who was clever and had an inbuilt crafty disposition, easily learned all the tricks of the trade from his master and being happy knowing what he had desired to know, refused to pay what he had agreed. As a result, he steered clear of the law courts, so he wouldn't have to pay Protagoras. His teacher finally brings him to court on this matter and argues his case, arguing that he must pay either for coming to court or by the verdict of the court. Apuleius interjects as if his audience is asking who won, and states that Protagoras' reasoning seemed incisively and invincibly conclusive to the judges. But, nevertheless, Euathlus, being the most perfect pupil, retorted with the same double-headed argument – that if he loses he doesn't have to pay, but if he wins he gets the money. Apuleius adds a comment, damning sophistic arguments in general.

Now we have already looked at the biographical sketch of Protagoras out of the context of the speech, but once it is reinserted into that context, we can appreciate how it responds to main themes of the speech. The description of Protagoras as *perfacundus* recalls Apuleius' failure to be 'most eloquent' (*facundissimum*) in front of his own audience.⁹⁷ Furthermore, the characterisation of Protagoras as among the 'first founders of rhetoric' (*cum primis rhetoricae repertoribus*) echoes the primacy of Carthage among Apuleius' 'first teachers' (*primos*

⁹⁷ Apuleius' eloquence is one of the first 'charges' in *Apol.*, which he answers by citing a saying of the archaic Roman comic poet Caecilius Statius that eloquence is innocence, making him 'the most eloquent' (*facundissimum*, *Apol.* 5.5). *Facundia* is one of the accusations that Marsyas aims at Apollo in *Fl.* 3.

magistros meos).⁹⁸ Finally, the fact that Protagoras' doctrine is 'supported' by Democritus links the verb *suppedito* with *suppeto*, used elsewhere in the speech of Apuleius' *oratio* in relation to his audience (*Fl.* 18.10) and the supply of encouragement (*Fl.* 18.14). This shows how rich this potted biography is; but we must not stop there. This richness of internal reference operates alongside and detonates significant inter-textual relationships as well.

The legal dispute between Protagoras and Euathlus is not only found in Apuleius' contemporary Aulus Gellius (5.10), it is also a commonplace story on the origins of rhetoric, most commonly attributed to Corax and Tisias.⁹⁹ Apuleius, as with Gellius' version, is interested in intellectual transmission and how teachers relate to students.¹⁰⁰ This is where the significance of the reference to Democritus *physicus* comes in. The relationship between Democritus and Protagoras is by no means a simple issue in philosophical histories.¹⁰¹ In fact, Apuleius' reference to the tradition that Democritus was a contemporary and teacher of Protagoras is generally dismissed as idle 'name-dropping'.¹⁰² But what happens if we give Apuleius more credit in his knowledge of philosophical history, or allow for the tradition that links Democritus and Protagoras to be transmitted via Gellius? At *Atticae Noctes* 5.3, Gellius tells of Protagoras' conversion to philosophy as aided by Democritus. In Gellius' version there is a reference to Democritus as *ciuitatis*

⁹⁸ Protagoras' identification as one of the first *repertores* of rhetoric pre-empts the description of Thales as the 'inventor' (*repertor*, *Fl.* 18.30) of geometry among the Greeks as well as his call for Mandraytus to 'recall him rather than any other inventor' (*quam alium repertorem praedicaris*, *Fl.* 18.34).

⁹⁹ On Corax and Tisias in general, see Cole (1991); Sextus Empiricus (*Adv. Math.* 2.96).

¹⁰⁰ There is a subtle link in the use of the neologism *diutule* to describe in Gellius the little time Euathlus had been the listener and follower of Protagoras, while in *Fl.* 18.23 it is of the time he delayed the bringing of a case. For further delays that frustrate a teacher, see *Fl.* 2.1, of a silent pupil before Socrates.

¹⁰¹ For the arguments for and against this teacher-pupil relationship see Davison (1953) 38–9, Warren (2002) 14–18. The biographical tradition links them and even adds that Democritus' nickname was 'The Wise', while Protagoras was named 'The Logos'.

¹⁰² Hunink (2001) 187, 'this philosopher...is named here for the sake of name-dropping, so it seems'.

eiusdem ciuis, which parallels Apuleius' *ciuis aequaeuus*. Unlike the teacher-pupil relationship between Protagoras and Euathlus, that between Democritus and Protagoras is much more congenial, even if Protagoras ends up as an *insincerus...philosophus...; acerrimus sophistarum fuit*.¹⁰³ Apuleius' conflation of the story of Democritus and Protagoras into the biographical sketch presages the positive pedagogic relationship to be articulated by the biography and anecdote of Thales. As we have seen, the association between Apuleius and Thales is made explicit with an autobiographical detail, as Apuleius has himself 'not only learned, but also proved through experimentation' Thales' theory regarding the sun (*equidem non didici modo, uerum etiam experiundo comprobaui, Fl.* 18.32).¹⁰⁴ This autobiographical reference to the speaker's own scientific learning and experimentation is also apparent within the anecdote about Thales and the prince (Mandraytus). Thales states that remembering that 'what you learned from me' (*id quod a me didicisti*, 34) is sufficient (*satis*, 34) payment (*merces*) for teaching (*edocuisse*, 33) it. This faithful referencing is performed by Apuleius 'to this day' (*in hodiernum*, 35).

Apuleius' association with the sage Thales relates to his distancing from the sophist Protagoras as a way of explaining his opening identification as a philosopher. Thales is described as the *primus repertor* of geometry and within the anecdote asks that no *alius repertor* be credited with his discovery. In his discussion of fish in the *Apologia*, Apuleius claims that he is not the first (*primum*, 36) to do so, and defers to several philosophical predecessors. Thus in his explication of the impossibility of sophistic pedagogy and preference for his role in learning from Thales, he is articulating his *philosophical* pedigree. That is not to say that Apuleius *directly* associates with the sage Thales, but that his desire to emulate Thales is part of his general

¹⁰³ Compare how Democritus addresses Protagoras as 'my young man' (*mi adulescens*, 5.3.6) with how Protagoras addresses Euathlus as 'most stupid young man' (*stultissime adulescens*, 5.10.9).

¹⁰⁴ Lee (2005) 176, compares the passage in *Apol.* 29–41 on the observations of fish. This scientific enquiry and experimentation seems especially at odds with sophistic pedagogy.

portrait of the philosopher.¹⁰⁵ In this way, as with the biography of Protagoras, Thales' biography helps position Apuleius' identity as well as being supplemented by the anecdotal narrative. For Apuleius, the Carthaginians are his *first* teachers and this acknowledgement distances him from Protagoras, since, even though he gained his knowledge from the *physicus* Democritus (*inde ei suppeditata doctrina est*), the sophistic form of pedagogy resists acknowledgement of the source of knowledge.

Issues of the origination and transmission of knowledge are central to anecdotal narratives.¹⁰⁶ Thales must be 'remembranced' as one of the legendary sages (*memoratis*) along with his *merces* (*Thalen memorant suasisse*), while within the anecdote he asks for his teaching to be 'remembranced' (*memoratur*). This transmission is also an aspect of biographical narration. Apuleius' audience seems not to know about the lives of Protagoras or Thales, yet they must be 'remembranced' as an expression of Apuleius' education. This pedagogic process has affinities with Platonic *anamnēsis* and it becomes clear that within the juxtaposition of Protagoras and Thales there is a potent Platonic echo.

If the Gellius texts (5.3 and 5.10) make sense of Apuleius' reference to Democritus and Protagoras in the biographical sketch in *Florida* 18, there is a striking Platonic precedent for the combination of Protagoras and Thales. In narrating both, Apuleius is allowing for the possibility that Protagoras' example could teach his audience about philosophy just as much as his affiliation to Thales the sage. There is one key text that implicates these two figures and which adds a further level to Apuleius' speech: Plato's *Theaetetus*.¹⁰⁷

Scholars have been happy enough with Protagoras' dramatic role in Apuleius' speech. It has seemed sufficient to note

¹⁰⁵ For the idea that the preference for the label 'philosopher' is inherently sceptical in presupposing a necessary distancing from the perfection of the sage, see Jardine (1983) 266–7.

¹⁰⁶ Lee (2005) 176, 'Apuleius defines Thales' *merces* as the potential for speech to name and remember, the same "value" which Apuleius ascribes to the potential of his own words.'

¹⁰⁷ For a theatrical reading of *Tht.* 171d1–3, see Burnyeat (1990) 192 n. 23.

parallels with other Second Sophistic appearances.¹⁰⁸ Considerations of the role of Protagoras in *Florida* 18 are exemplified by the tendency to identify the fifth-century sophist with our author Apuleius, in spite of his protestations and his identification as a philosopher. However, introducing Protagoras on stage at this point in the speech, especially as a negative *exemplum*, has direct Platonic pedigree. As with Apuleius' speech, Plato juxtaposes Protagoras and Thales in a discussion of what constitutes the philosopher and the implications of the role of philosopher in society.

The digression in the *Theaetetus* (172c–177c) has a privileged role in Middle Platonic doctrine since it is the clearest exposition in the corpus of the *telos* as assimilation to god (176b).¹⁰⁹ It is also a vital text for debating what the philosopher is.¹¹⁰ It is within the context of the latter that *Florida* 18 has been acknowledged as part of an argument in which Apuleius reverses the portrayal of Thales in the *Theaetetus*, making Protagoras the comic figure.¹¹¹ However, there is the additional level to this reference that it not only saves the contemplative philosopher from the well, but also transposes the comic philosopher of the lawcourt (*Tht.* 174c) onto the sophist Protagoras. For Apuleius' own situation, performing as a philosopher in a theatre, he is dangerously close to resembling the other performers typical to the stage, such as comedy. Nevertheless, he also manipulates his mediating position, between his comic sophist and Plato's comic figure of Thales, to present the philosopher who will teach his audience to look beyond the confines of the theatrical *locus*. This transcending of the theatrical *locus* may add a further Platonic resonance. It has been argued that the digression in the *Theaetetus* relates to the Analogy of the Cave in the *Republic*, in that the prisoner who

¹⁰⁸ Lee (2005) 174 lists the 'similar Second Sophistic appearances of Protagoras'.

¹⁰⁹ Tarrant (2000a) 181. For a summary of this doctrine in dogmatic Platonism, see Dillon (1993) 171–2.

¹¹⁰ Cicero *De Off.* 1.28, at which he critiques *Tht.* 173e.

¹¹¹ O'Brien (2002) 25, 'Apuleius turns around Plato's *exemplum* of the perplexed philosopher by making Protagoras the laughing stock and saving Thales from his indignity.'

escapes appears just as foolish in the lawcourts (*Rep.* 517d), as the philosopher in the lawcourts in the *Theaetetus*.¹¹² Thus, in narrating the anecdotes and sketching the portraits of Protagoras and Thales in the theatrical cave, Apuleius is teaching his audience to look beyond them to his own position as a philosopher: to his *oratio* and their *ratio*. In the conclusion of the speech, the Platonic precedence for Apuleius' performance becomes all the clearer as he brings his own written dialogue on stage.

Let us take stock of the speech so far. What has the speaker's audience learned? They know that they are Apuleius' first teachers, but the way they have learned this, how the message has been transmitted and the debt paid, is through learning that they are not his *only* teachers. If we take a strong Platonic reading of the choice of Protagoras and Thales, we realise that it is Plato who is the true *magister* of the philosopher-speaker. Just as Plato moves from the characterisation of Protagoras to the digressive portrait of Thales in the *Theaetetus* to delineate what the philosopher is and his essential embodiment, Apuleius brings Protagoras and Thales on stage to affirm *his* identity as a philosopher. Apuleius' reversal of the Platonic figure of Thales as a philosopher out of touch with politics is also intimated by Apuleius' summarising statement that follows the Thales anecdote (*Fl.* 18.35):

pulchra merces prorsum ac tali uiro digna et perpetua; nam et in hodiernum ac dein semper Thali ea merces persoluetur ab omnibus nobis, qui eius caelestia studia uere cognouimus.

This is indeed a fine fee, and, as is worthy of such a great man, eternal; for to this day and ever after, that fee will be paid to Thales by all of us who have truly recognised his heavenly researches.

It has been noted that the reference to the *pulchra merces* is markedly Platonic.¹¹³ Furthermore, Thales' researches are 'heavenly' to those who know them, both in the sense that

¹¹² Sedley (2004) 65.

¹¹³ Lee (2005) 177, 'one cannot help but think of *kalos*, as if Thales had received Plato's sanction'.

they are to do with the heavens and in their general sublime nature, which reiterates the same pun for Plato's eloquence in relation to the *Timaeus* in both the *Apologia* (*caelesti quadam facundia*, *Apol.* 49.1) and *De deo Socratis* (*caelesti facundia praeditus*, *Soc.* 3.124). The conflation of investigation into the heavens with heavenly eloquence is confirmed when Apuleius' speech moves towards a discussion of religious matters.¹¹⁴ In this transition, the speaker refers to his reverence for the Carthaginian gods and states that he is going to narrate a hymn to the god Aesculapius, prefaced with a dialogue in praise of Carthage.¹¹⁵ This autobiographical reference to the reverence to the local gods adds a further twist to the heavenly pun. There may be a more parochial link between Thales' *caelestia studia* and the Carthaginian goddess Caelestis, in whose honour various stage shows were produced.¹¹⁶ The religious conclusion of *Florida* 18 becomes the final stage of the self-fashioning of the philosopher, specifically through the role of performing Platonic philosophy for Carthage in respect to her gods.

The way in which Apuleius articulates his philosophical voice is in relation to his audience, in the Platonic synergy of *ratio* and *oratio* and the autobiographical details of his Carthaginian affiliation. So, when Protagoras and Thales enter as a mode of demonstrating his philosophical affiliation, where does the audience go? The simple answer is that they get subsumed under the pedagogic role of Thales in the anecdote. He continues (*Fl.* 18.36):

¹¹⁴ Compare *Apol.* 64.3, with the self-reference to the heavenly (*caeleste*) Platonic family, and to *altitudinis studio*, on which, see O'Brien (2002) 7.

¹¹⁵ See *Apol.* 55, on all the cults known to Apuleius, in which he refers to discoursing on Aesculapius (*disserens*) and boasts that the speech earned the sympathy of the religious people of Oea not so much through his eloquence (*facundia*) as through the mention of Aesculapius. Note also how the opposition of *facundia* and religious observance is part of the biographical differences between Protagoras (*perfacundus*) and Thales.

¹¹⁶ On Caelestis, see bibliography at Bradley (2005) 16 n. 21. Bradley refers to Augustine *De Civ.* 2.26. Apuleius make one explicit reference to Caelestis at *Met.* 6.4., as Juno. Caelestis was linked with Aesculapius in a Carthaginian context in two inscriptions: 1) CIL III, 993, *Caelesti Augustae et Aesculapio Augusto et Genio Carthaginiis*...; 2) CIL VIII, 16417, [...] *sacerdos publicus Deae Caelestis et Aesculapi arcum* [...], quoted by Halsberghe (1984) 2216, n. 67.

The philosopher's audience

hanc ego uobis, mercedem, Carthaginienses, ubique gentium dependo pro disciplinis, quas in pueritia sum apud uos adeptus. ubique enim me uestrae ciuitatis alumnum fero, ubique uos omnimodis laudibus celebro, uestras disciplinas studiosius percolo, uestras opes gloriosius praedico, uestros etiam deos religiosius ueneror.

From me to you, Carthaginians, it is this fee I pay, everywhere in the world, for the lessons I acquired from you in my boyhood. For everywhere I go I disclose that I am a pupil of your city, everywhere I celebrate you with multifarious praises, I more studiously cultivate your lessons, I more boastfully proclaim your wealth, and I more religiously adore your gods.

Somehow Apuleius' praise of the Carthaginian education system climaxes with a reference to 'your gods' (*uestros . . . deos*). While there was a mention of the 'household gods' (*lares*) in the autobiographical section, the religious element seems missing up until this point. The religious focus of this flourish is based not only on the conclusion, but also on the use of the verbs *celebro*, *percolo* and *praedico*, as they 'bind celebratory rhetoric into a praxis of religion and study'.¹¹⁷ As already noted, this bind occurs through the *caelestia studia* of Thales. The religious terminology has also become part of the discourse on intellectual debt, as there is a further meaning to *persoluo* at the end of the Thales passage in relation to both the payment of an intellectual and religious debt.¹¹⁸

It is in these terms that the speech appears to begin again with the entrance of the local god (*Fl.* 18.37):

nunc quoque igitur principium mihi apud uestras auras auspicatissimum ab Aesculapio deo capiam, qui arcem nostrae Carthaginis indubitabili numine propitius strepit.¹¹⁹

Therefore, now too, I take a most auspicious starting point among you from speaking about the god Aesculapius, who grants favour with his manifest divinity, setting the citadel of our Carthage a-rumblng.

¹¹⁷ Lee (2005) 177.

¹¹⁸ Seneca *Ep.* 109.17, *persolui quod exegeras* on a philosophical point and there is also the potential pun in *persoluo* for the matter of an eclipse. The term is used at *Met.* 11.24 in relation to Lucius' debt to Isis. It may be worth noting that just before he was set up as a statue of the Sun.

¹¹⁹ See Lee (2005) 177 for the textual problem here and the choice of *strepit*, which encompasses a different form of *persona* as an aural sign of the god's *numen*.

The whole speech up to this point (the praise of Carthage, of learning and of philosophy) has been in preparation for a religious discourse. It is the climax of the speech and the reverence to Aesculapius that enables Apuleius to adopt the Platonic role of dramaturge in bringing one of his own dialogues onto the stage. The end of *Florida* 18 projects a bilingual hymn and a dialogue in honour of Aesculapius (*Fl.* 18.38–40):

eius dei hymnum Graeco et Latino carmine uobis etiam canam illi a me dedicatum. sum enim non ignotus illi sacrificola nec recens cultor nec ingratus antistes, ac iam et prorsa et uorsa facundia ueneratus sum, ita ut etiam nunc hymnum eius utraque lingua canam, cui dialogum similiter Graecum et Latinum praetexui, in quo sermocinabuntur Sabidius Seuerus et Iulius Persius, uiri et inter se mutuo et uobis et utilitatibus publicis merito amicissimi, doctrina et eloquentia et beniuolentia paribus, incertum modestia quietiores an industria promptiores an honoribus clariores.

I shall even sing you a hymn to this god in Greek and Latin verse, dedicated to him by me. For I am well-known to him as sacrificer, recent devotee and grateful priest, and I have before now venerated him in prose and fluent verse, just as now too I shall sing a hymn in both languages, to which I have added a Greek and Latin dialogue as a preface, in which Sabidius Severus and Julius Persius will converse, men who are close to each other, as well as being the best of friends to you and the public welfare, matched in learning, eloquence and benefaction, and no one can tell if their modesty is quieter, their industry more willing or their honours more distinguished.

The dynamic interaction between Apuleius' Socratic and Platonic roles is worth unpacking in this passage. In his bilingual dialogue, Apuleius has Severus and Persius 'converse' (*sermocinabuntur*), which is the same term used of the comic actor earlier in the speech (*comoedus sermocinatur*, *Fl.* 18.4). Furthermore, as with Plautus' authorial role in his dramas, we discover that Apuleius directs the action of his dialogue on stage. At the 'beginning of the book' (*in principio libri*, *Fl.* 18.42) Apuleius 'makes' (*facio*) one of the students who studied with him in Athens ask Persius, in Greek, what he was 'lecturing' (*disseruerim*) on in the temple of Aesculapius the previous day. This harks back to earlier in the speech, with Apuleius 'lecturing as a philosopher' (*philosophus...dissertare*, *Fl.* 18.1). Then, after a while, he 'joins' (*adiungo*) Severus to the conversation, to whom he has 'given' (*dedi*) the Latin part. Within his

dialogue Apuleius plays the role of Socrates, but as dramaturge Plato. It is no coincidence that in another excerpt from the *Florida*, when Apuleius describes the genres that philosophers have written in, he states that Socrates sang hymns, while Plato, dialogues (*Fl.* 20.5). The roles of Severus and Persius in the dialogue are finessed by character traits praised by Apuleius. He describes them as the best of friends; to each other, to the audience and to the public good (*uiri et inter se mutuo et uobis et utilitatibus publicis merito amicissimi*). They are equal in learning, eloquence and benevolence, and no one can tell whether they are more restrained in modesty, more ready for hard work or distinguished in honours (*doctrina et eloquentia et beniuolentia paribus, incertum modestia quietiores an industria promptiores an honoribus clariores*). Unlike the claims of victory in the exemplary lawsuit of Protagoras and Euathlus, neither Severus nor Persius can win in the competition of their love for Carthage. This panegyric of his friends transforms the speaker's own issues into expressing his love of Carthage. While he was most ready to speak among strangers (*promptissime*), they are more ready in their hard work (*industria promptiores*). While modesty is harmful to Apuleius among his own people (*apud suos cuique modestia obnoxia est*), they are restrained in modesty. These correspondences show how articulating praise for Carthage is difficult for Apuleius in his own voice, but when he can put others on stage in a dramatised dialogue, these sentiments can be stated without difficulty.

The loss of dialogue and hymn follows the theory that Apuleius' excerptor did not know Greek or was excerpting for a non-Greek audience, especially as it appears to have begun with the Greek section by Julius Persius.¹²⁰ This aspect of the bilingual dialogue has monopolised discussion and little attention has been paid to how the projected dialogue would fit into the contexts of the current speech. This mention of a 'dialogue' has been read as Platonic, within the Latin tradition of the Ciceronian and Senecan mode.¹²¹ But it is crucial to note

¹²⁰ Lee (2005) 178.

¹²¹ See Hunink (1996) on the pseudo-Apuleian *Asclepius* and the dialogue form, 'It might be objected that in Roman literature, *dialogus* had come to mean simply

that, *unlike* Plato's dialogues and the Latin tradition, we are given Apuleius' explicit dramaturgic role in orchestrating this dialogue (through the first-person verbs *facio* and *adiungo*).

Furthermore, there are major links between the discussion of the *merces* and Apuleius' relationship with his audience. First, the presence of one who studied with Apuleius in Athens harks back to the issue of Apuleius' education in Athens earlier in the speech. The concluding dialogue in its absence should also oblige the reader to reconsider what kind of dialogue has been taking place in the extant text. Between the *philosophus* and the *sophista* and *sapiens*, between the *ratio* of the audience and the *oratio* of the speaker, between Carthage, Athens and Rome, *Florida* 18 brings (Platonic) philosophy on stage before the Carthaginian civic community.¹²² As with the dynamic synergy in the *Apologia* between the Platonising first half and the family drama of the second, *Florida* 18 delineates his philosophical education through the contrasting anecdotes of Protagoras and Thales. Ultimately Apuleius needs to make sense in terms of a narrative of his pedagogic role as a philosopher in Carthage, wherein the *ratio* of his audience (his first educators) balances the eloquence and didacticism of his speech to them (his *oratio*). The image of the Platonic body of philosophy from *De Platone*, therefore, not only reappears in the *Florida* collection as a whole, but in the explicit act of repayment of Apuleius' *merces*. Perhaps the most stunning coup of *Florida* 18 is that Apuleius takes a topos from Classical sophistry – payment for education and its contemporary performative contexts: a speech delivered before a community – and turns them into a philosophical lesson, grounded in his Platonism. This *pulchra merces* of

"philosophical treatise" without any exchange of ideas between speakers. The *dialogi* of Seneca present a clear example of this. But considering Apuleius' conspicuous Platonism, it seems more likely that his "dialogues" remained closer to the original, Platonic form. As a dialogue, the *Asclepius* may be compared to the later Platonic dialogues, where there is no lively discussion, but merely the setting of a conversation, with one speaker exposing his views. This type of philosophical dialogue had been used by Cicero too.'

¹²² Lee (2001) 41, 'Rather than describing it as philosophy debased, we might recognise he made it possible for the whole city to move towards philosophy, and to celebrate it in a civic context.'

The philosopher's audience

the philosopher, then, acts as a powerful image of the impersonation of philosophy to add to the images of the body of *De Platone*, the flight in *De mundo*, the oath in *De deo Socratis* and the defence in the *Apologia*.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

(*Metamorphoses*)

A narratology for philosophy

This book has offered a new approach to reading the Apuleian corpus in terms of Apuleius' Platonism. At the same time it has emphasised that what we should understand as Apuleius' Platonism should not be seen as a homogeneous, doctrinal unity, but a series of methodologically related, individually nuanced strategies that traverse the range of his literary corpus. Any traditional division between 'rhetorical works' and 'philosophical works' should be understood in terms of methodological variety adopted by the different impersonations of philosophy for the exegete and speaker. The biographical exegesis of the handbook *De Platone* may be re-articulated in a performative context in the lecture *De deo Socratis*, wherein Apuleius the *interpres* mediates the *sententia* of Plato in his own voice. But there is also considerable cross-over between how both works splinter into other voices of conceptual personification, where the exemplary figure of Socrates of *De deo Socratis* can be understood in terms of the *sapiens* of *De Platone*. Furthermore, the concluding protreptic of *De deo Socratis* offers an intensification of the more subtle emergence of authorial protreptic towards the end of *De Platone*. This protreptic conclusion to both *De Platone* and *De deo Socratis* can further be understood in relation to the two halves of the *Apologia*. The first half grounds Apuleius' self-presentation as a specifically Platonist philosopher, while the family drama of the second half offers a more generalised portrait of the philosopher as teacher. It is only at the end of the speech that we realise that Apuleius' Platonism paved the way for the latter role. Yet while there are movements beyond Plato's authority in *Apologia*, *De deo Socratis* and, in some senses, *De Platone*, there are also

pivotal returns to Plato in *De mundo* and *Florida* 18. Such returns appear in both the concluding translation of the passage from Plato's *Laws* that explicitly combines the opening image of the flight of Philosophy with the conceptual personification of the *rector mundi* and also the projected bilingual dialogue that ends our extant text of *Florida* 18.

In addition to such methodological correspondences, Apuleius makes an explicit correlation between his own literary production and Plato's creation of (Platonic) philosophy through the key image for the basic philosophical nature of his work as a dual process of filing down with *ratio* and dressing up with *oratio*. This image recurs throughout the corpus in an array of impersonations of philosophy, from the expansive images of Philosophy's flight in *De mundo* and Philosophy's trial of *Apologia*, to the more focused metaphors of the 'oath' (*sacramentum*) and 'payment' (*merces*) of Philosophy in *De deo Socratis* and *Florida* 18. Each image acts as a focal point for a particular methodological approach. For *De mundo*, it is the parallelism between the way Apuleius' treatise surveys the Universe and praises its harmony through the guidance of the *rector mundi* that makes the flight of Philosophy the central image. The conflation of Apuleius' own trial and the defence of philosophy, by contrast, is articulated through modulation of the rhetorical gearing between the two halves of the speech: how the family drama hinges on his role as a Platonic educator. As for *De deo Socratis*, the intensification of Platonic demonological theory into the protreptic idea of the cultivation of the soul as an inner *daemon* calls for philosophy to be articulated in terms of the structure of the Universe and the ethical compass of mankind. Finally, *Florida* 18 transforms the conventionally sophistic idea of payment for philosophical education into a Platonic lesson for his Carthaginian audience.

Bridging the methodological approaches and these potent images is nothing less than the consistent re-activation of the life of Plato itself. The biographical trajectory of *De Platone* offers a series of stages to this process in presenting the biography of Plato as the grounding for the core biographical exegesis and its nuanced variation in terms of conceptual

personification and authorial protreptic. Each of these voices contributes to the methodological developments of *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis*. In the former, the image of the flight of Philosophy and the catascopic perspective of the *rector mundi* act as a forceful conceptual personification that paves the way for an authorial protreptic. In the latter, the return to biographical exegesis in the first part of the lecture is coupled with the mediating voice of the *interpres* and in turn become, through the exemplary figure of Socrates, perhaps the most powerful authorial protreptic of the whole corpus. Conversely, Apuleius' related, but significantly differentiated, roles as Platonic philosopher on trial and philosopher on stage in the *Apologia* and *Florida* can be understood not only within the variety of exegetical roles played in *De Platone*, *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis*, but also in terms of their differing approaches to mapping the stages of the biography of Plato of *De Platone*. The self-presentation of the philosopher, while grounded in particular performative contexts, must evoke the idealised portrait of the philosophical master for a successful protreptic to take place. In this way the explicit Platonism of *De Platone*, *De deo Socratis* and the *Apologia* still informs the emphasis on the role of philosophy more generally in *De mundo* and the *Florida*. As we saw in *Florida* 18, the performance context of the Carthaginian theatre instigates the face-off between the philosopher and the sophist specifically along Platonic lines, while the concluding translation of a passage of Plato's *Laws* in *De mundo* is the explicit hinge between the flight of Philosophy and the *rector mundi*.

My insistence on Apuleius' methodologies for presenting Platonic philosophy in this book and emphasis on the nuances of various voices and the proliferation of images as interpretive keys have an obvious affinity with a well-established approach to Apuleius' novel: Winkler's acclaimed narratological reading of the *Metamorphoses*.¹ Winkler emphasised the singular narratological complexity and hermeneutic sophistication of Apuleius' novel, but very much at the expense

¹ Winkler (1985).

of the other works of the corpus. When he gestured towards other works, this was more often than not to ground particular misguided ‘readings’ of the text that were at odds with the process of reading generated by the text itself. Yet Winkler’s approach does in fact lend itself to the rest of the corpus in a way that encompasses the singularity of the *Metamorphoses*, rather than detracts from it. My emphasis on the impersonation of philosophy throughout the book, both in terms of guiding methodologies and key images, could be synthesised with Winkler’s narratological reading of the novel and be understood as Apuleius’ narratology for philosophy. In what follows, I want to take some tentative first steps in this direction by suggesting a few ways in which the *Metamorphoses* can be approached as itself offering such a narratology for philosophy taken to extremes. After a brief contextualisation of the novel within other Platonising fictions of the period, I shall focus on some key moments in which the *Metamorphoses* offers its own impersonations of philosophy and I shall show how here, as in the other works in the corpus, my methodological approach bears fruit.

Platonic fiction

Fiction, like oratory, has not been central to discussions of the range of philosophical and Platonic writing of the second century.² Yet Platonising fiction was popular in the Second Sophistic and it took a variety of forms, ranging from the inter-textual to the allegorical.³ The former can be seen in how fictional narratives used allusions to Plato’s dialogues, especially the erotic dialogues (*Symposium* and *Phaedrus*) as part of their setting and narratives as a means of adding literary prestige to a traditionally ‘low’ genre.⁴ The latter can be seen in the

² For example, there is no discussion of fiction in the survey of Dörrie and Baltes (1993). Although, see now Hunter (2012) 223–55.

³ For a neat balancing of these two approaches, see Morgan and Jones (2007) viii–ix.

⁴ For example, in Trapp (1990) for the *Phaedrus* in *Daphnis and Chloe* and Marinčič (2007) 180–1 for the *Symposium* as framing device in *Leucippe and Cleitophon*. On the *Symposium* in ancient fiction in general, see Hunter (2006).

use of the popular contemporary practice of allegorical reading for fictional narratives, which were understood to convey basic philosophical truths.⁵ Both approaches (allusive and allegorical) demand a certain interpretative method that seeks to uncover philosophical resonances or structures in an ostensibly non-philosophical genre. Nonetheless, there is a strong historical argument in favour of seeing the development of fiction in antiquity as explicitly originating in the Socratic dialogue,⁶ and Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* fits easily into the allusive, allegorical and generic range of fictional Platonising in the period; but how does Apuleius' fictional narrative of Lucius' adventures as an ass and eventual 'salvation' through the goddess Isis fit into the rhetorical-philosophical tooling of his Platonic corpus as I have described it? One initial answer would be to see Apuleius' novel as continuing his Platonising work through other means. In this regard, a comparison with Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Cleitophon* is instructive. The Greek novel has been read, like the *Metamorphoses*, as Platonic allegory, and it has also been seen as utilising various Platonic quotations and themes, especially from the *Phaedrus*.⁷ While there is plenty of evidence to support these approaches and readings, there is further nuance. In the recent work of Morales and Graverini, Achilles Tatius has been shown to be developing various (Platonic) philosophical themes in a fictional setting. Morales shows how the narrative thematises and problematises issues of vision, mirroring and self-knowledge that originate in Plato's texts and thought.⁸ Graverini explicitly compares the *Metamorphoses* to *Leucippe and Cleitophon* in terms of their approach to themes of desire, seduction and amazement.⁹ Both projects show how these novelists do not merely ask their readers to expect, and find, Platonic allegory and reference in these themes, but to understand how philosophising is at its very basic level a mode of fictionalisation. The question 'who speaks' (*quis ille?*, *Met.* 1.1), that

⁵ For example, on the use of Homeric allegory in Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*, see Lamberton (1986) 148–60.

⁶ Bakhtin (1981), Laird (2003). ⁷ Morales (2004) 56.

⁸ Morales (2004). ⁹ Graverini (2009).

is central to our understanding of the novel, now reads as a rephrasing of basic issues of impersonation at the heart of philosophical writing and identity. From this perspective, the *Metamorphoses* extends the Platonising of the rest of the corpus to an especially heightened plane, in a monumental parade of the images and processes of impersonation that Apuleius puts to work across his Platonic corpus.¹⁰ In this reading, the Cupid and Psyche episode would be the main piece of evidence for an extreme version of the conceptual personification we have encountered elsewhere.

Yet, as we have seen throughout this book, Apuleius' relationship with his Platonising contemporaries is one in which he forever challenges the extent to which they claim to speak for Plato. To see the *Metamorphoses* as yet *another* Platonising fiction would underestimate the depth, complexity and coherence of Apuleius' overall Platonic project. Take, for example, the *Apologia*. As we have seen, Platonising references – quoting Plato and expounding Platonic theories – in the first part of the speech ground Apuleius' defence in the manipulation of the Greek letter of Pudentilla and Apuleius' role as an educator to her sons, Pontianus and Pudens. Furthermore, we can see how the groundwork for these themes is set by the use of Greek quotation from Plato as a means of educating his audience and focalising the philosopher-judge Maximus. Apuleius' Platonist identity of defendant is no mere show-boating, but is pivotal to proving his accusers' misquotation of the Greek of Pudentilla, an accusation that parallels the misguided education and guidance that Pontianus and Pudens were receiving at the hands of Aemilianus. The transition from explicit Platonising in the first part of the speech to the narrative of a family drama with the philosopher as the main character produces a powerful narratology for philosophy. This narratology is, once more, grounded in the central, pervasive dual-action metaphor of Plato's body of philosophy: traction between the 'filing down' with *ratio* and 'dressing up' with *oratio*. In the *Apologia*, the autobiographical narrative operates as the basic

¹⁰ Morales (2004). And also Graverini (2009) and (2010).

rationale for the speech, which in turn, is written in such a way as to display the sheer eloquence and range of the Platonic performer. This dynamic is also at work in *Florida* 18. Apuleius' co-ordination of his philosophical identity with the civic context of Carthage parallels his narrative of a philosopher on trial. The synergistic anecdote of Protagoras and Thales shows off the philosopher's education, but the basic point of doing so is to praise the people of Carthage as his first educators and pay them back. Once again the narrative thread of the speech sustains the embellishments and supplements of philosophical showmanship.

Both narratives of the second half of the *Apologia* and *Florida* 18 offer a way for us to undertake a radical re-evaluation of the role of Platonism in the *Metamorphoses*. Like the second half of the *Apologia* and *Florida* 18, the fictional narrative of Lucius' adventures, his transformation into a donkey and his eventual (faux) redemption as an Isiac initiate are in no way marked as explicitly Platonic. Nonetheless, throughout its reading history it has lent itself to philosophical, and specifically Platonic, exegesis.¹¹ Often with the rest of the corpus as a backdrop, Platonic readings have been made of the novel, whether of specific episodes (e.g. the Prologue, Aristomenes' tale of Socrates, the Cupid and Psyche inset or the concluding Isis book) or of its overall themes (e.g. reincarnation or *curiositas*). Yet while the *Florida* may be less explicitly Platonic than other works, at any rate it sets philosophy up as a central concern through the identity of the speaker and the exemplary narratives of the philosophical life and philosophical discourse. For the *Metamorphoses*, even the most basic philosophical reading remains a matter of speculation. Given this situation, readers of the *Metamorphoses* that see it as a Platonist's novel or a philosophical fiction have looked for hidden clues either in the narrative itself or in comparable sections of the philosophical work. Although it is not a reading of the philosophical work itself that is used to support a philosophical and Platonic reading of the novel, the mere fact of its

¹¹ For a helpful survey, see Harrison (2000) 252–9.

existence in making Apuleius a Platonist is then adopted as a reading strategy for the novel. Apuleius' philosophical credentials have either been emphasised or undermined for the explicit purpose of emphasising or undermining Platonist and philosophical readings of the *Metamorphoses*. For example, in the former situation, the phrase 'as a *Platonicus philosophus*' has introduced many a speculative philosophical reading of the novel or grounded isolated Platonic resonances.¹²

But even when Apuleius' own works are utilised to ground philosophical and Platonic readings of the novel, there is always the danger of the former being homogenised and caricatured so as to be malleable as a source-text. I hope to have demonstrated throughout this book that while Apuleius' Platonic corpus can (and should) be read 'whole', it is also essential to see each text as enacting its own unique methodology. It is with this more nuanced approach that we appreciate that the relationship between Platonism and philosophy in Apuleius is not straightforward, as my discussions of the dynamic between the *Apologia* and *Florida* have shown. Consider Winkler's statement about the 'philosophic reading' as exemplary of the problems faced with demarcating this difference in interpretations of the novel:

Apuleius was known as *Platonicus*, a name based on his pamphlets expounding a Platonic philosophy, on his (lost) translations of Plato's works into Latin, and on his self-presentation as a philosopher in his *Apologia*. There are many themes and names and situations in the *A[sinus] A[ureus]* that can plausibly be read as references to Platonic dialogues and developments of Academic principles. The *AA* is a philosophic novel.¹³

Winkler's summary of the philosophic reading of the *Metamorphoses*, which will be strongly resisted by his own approach, offers three ways of understanding how the text has lent itself

¹² Krabbe (2003) 375. Sometimes this is turned on its head and the Platonism of the novel is understood in spite of Apuleius' own Platonism. Relihan (2009) xii: 'I think that the reader trying to make sense of the whole [of the Cupid and Psyche episode] needs to be aware of these [Platonic passages] at the outset, as any ancient reader would have brought them to bear even if not aware of Apuleius' pretensions as a Platonic philosopher.'

¹³ Winkler (1985) 5.

to such a reading, especially in terms of the role of the rest of the corpus as authorising such a reading and the issue of the demarcation between Platonism and philosophy. Winkler leads us to conclude from the fact that Apuleius was a Platonist that the *Metamorphoses* can be (but should not be) read as a ‘philosophic novel’. This means that the first issue that needs to be at least raised, if not thoroughly examined, is the relationship between Platonism, philosophy and the genre of the novel. The other trajectory marked out by Winkler’s summary of the philosophic reading is the manifestation of Apuleius’ Platonism in ‘themes, names and situations’ in the *Metamorphoses* explicitly through their site of origination. Either such themes are enabled by referencing ‘Platonic dialogues’ or through the development of certain ‘Academic principles’, whatever they may be. What is at stake here is how we account for the difference between ‘reference’ and ‘development’; ‘Platonic dialogues’ and ‘Academic principles’. For example, if we agree that the setting of Plato’s *Phaedrus* is alluded to at the end of the tale of ‘Socrates’ in Book 1 with the evocation of a plane tree and a river, does this constitute a development of ‘Academic principles’? If so, in what form does such a development take, beyond the mere fact of reference? These questions become especially pertinent when readers claim that the novel engages with Apuleius’ other Platonic works, such as the exemplary case of the scene of Socrates in the *Phaedrus* in *De deo Socratis*. Must we see the fictional treatment of this scene as developing the standard treatment of the philosophical lecture? Or can a balance be achieved that does not necessitate an undermining of the *philosophica* on behalf of the literary masterpiece?¹⁴ The first step in escaping this bind is, instead of asking such questions from the perspective of the Platonic or philosophical reading of the novel, I will take these three aspects of Winkler’s summary – genre, reference and development – as the

¹⁴ In recent discussions, Platonic reference has been read as part of the complex literary texture of the novel and Apuleius’ Platonism has not been invoked to give Platonic allusion a privileged position in the texture of the work – e.g. Graverini (2007).

first steps in a more radical re-evaluation of the place of the *Metamorphoses* within the Platonist's corpus.

The Platonic credentials of the *Metamorphoses* have been claimed to operate at a generic level. Since antiquity the Cupid and Psyche episode has been singled out as a Platonic allegory, which itself originates in Plato's own myth-making in his dialogues.¹⁵ Moreover, discussions of the origins of the novel-genre in antiquity have centred on the role of Socratic dialogue in general and Plato's dialogues in particular as important precursors.¹⁶ The *Metamorphoses* has been described as 'a Platonic dialogue between author and reader rather than characters in the script'.¹⁷ The dialogic qualities of the narrative are initiated by the Prologue, but continue in the narrative exchanges developed throughout the text. For example, Aristomenes' tale of 'Socrates' is perhaps the paradigmatic narrative for this conception of the novel as a dialogic genre after the mode of the Socratic dialogue.¹⁸

Beyond the general question of genre, the uncovering of Platonic themes, names and situations in the *Metamorphoses* has taken up most of the energy of scholars. While I have pointed out possible Platonic resonances in my reading of other works of the corpus – from the reworking of the *Phaedo* in Socrates' dream in the biography of Plato in *De Platone* to the digression of the *Theaetetus* in *Florida* 18 – I have been mainly interested in the broader methodological issues of Apuleius' Platonism than his obvious allusions to Plato. Mapping textual relations is fruitful, but for the present study a much more basic narratological framework has been required to unify the Apuleian corpus in terms of his Platonist project. The range of Platonic reference discovered in the novel is astounding. The core theme of metamorphosis has been understood according to the Pythagorean-Platonic transmigration of souls.¹⁹ The appearance of the theme of *curiositas* in both Apuleius

¹⁵ For a nuanced discussion of Cupid and Psyche as Platonic myth, see O'Brien (2002) 77–90.

¹⁶ Bakhtin (1981). ¹⁷ Winkler (1985) 126.

¹⁸ For the Aristomenes tales as parodic Socratic dialogue, see Keulen (2003).

¹⁹ Schlam (1970) 480.

and Plutarch has been explained by their shared Platonist credentials.²⁰ Themes directly related to specific dialogues have been entertained, including justice and the law in the *Republic* and *Laws*, desire in the *Symposium* and pleasure in the *Philebus*.²¹ One particularly fruitful area of Platonic reference is that of the naming of characters. From the Socrates of Aristomenes' tale, to Philebus and Thrasyllus, Apuleius' Platonism appears to be the explanation for Apuleius' name choices.²² Another level to this approach is to read certain scenes in the novel as responding to Apuleius' own reworking of Platonic themes elsewhere in his corpus. For example, the debate about divination in Book 2 between Lucius and Milo appears to be replaying or pre-empting a discussion of the topic of *daemones* as divinatory intermediaries in *De deo Socratis*. However, by showing the nuances of Apuleius' Platonism throughout this book, I am committed to avoiding any simplistic mapping of Apuleius' philosophical identity in the rest of the corpus onto the question of Platonic genre or reference in the *Metamorphoses*. Instead, as with the other works in the corpus, we have to explore not only how Platonism works in the text, but also how it is developed *by* the work. I want to offer an exemplary reading to make my case and show how reading certain scenes of the novel with a philosophical work (such as *De deo Socratis*) does not demand that the philosophical work authorise the fictional text, but instead shows how the conditions of fictional narrative develop philosophical perspectives explored by both. I want to look at two moments from early in the narrative when we encounter Lucius 'philosophising': first, his reply to disbelief from Aristomenes' companion in response to the tale of 'Socrates'; and second, his conversation with Milo about divination.²³ Both scenes are related to one another by

²⁰ Walsh (1970) 182; DeFilippo (1990).

²¹ *Republic*: Tarrant (1999); *Laws*: Krabbe (2003) 373–414; *Symposium*: Dowden (2006); *Philebus*: Krabbe (2003) 337–72.

²² On *Philebus*, see Krabbe (2003) 337–72; Thrasyllus: Repath (2000); Thelyphron: O'Brien (2004).

²³ This is perhaps the crux of the question of how philosophy enters into the narrative of the *Met*. When interpretive judgements are offered in the story – from Lucius before and after Aristomenes' tale to the verdict of Mithras – do these constitute a

potential philosophical readings and references issuing from *De deo Socratis*, the former by the imagery of the *Phaedrus* that ends the tale and the latter by a more general account of the Platonic cosmos. In both, we cannot simply see Lucius as the mouthpiece of the philosopher, but the whole setting of the narrative reads as deploying a development of certain philosophical ideas, especially the transmission of divine knowledge to humans.

The setting of the end of the tale of Socrates has been registered as marking a very specific Platonic reference. After the night in which he witnessed (what he thought was) Socrates being killed by vengeful witches, Aristomenes describes how he and his rejuvenated companion sat down by a plane tree (*Met.* 1.18) to eat and then how Socrates drank from the stream that flowed nearby (*Met.* 1.19). This setting has been read as an explicit reference to the setting of the *Phaedrus* – the discussion under a plane tree near the River Ilissus.²⁴ The role of the river has been seen in relation to its ‘summary’ in *De deo Socratis* in the following passage (*Soc.* 19.164–5):

in huiusmodi rebus uocem quampiam diuinitus exortam dicebat audire – ita enim apud Platonem, ne quisquam arbitretur omnia eum uulgo loquentium capitasse. quippe etiam semotis arbitris uno cum Phaedro extra pomerium sub quodam arboris opaco umbraculo signum illud adnuntium sensit, ne prius transcendet Ilissi amnis modicum fluentum, quam increpitum indignatum Amorem recinendo placasset; cum praeterea, si omina obseruaret, aliquando eorum nonnulla etiam hortamenta haberet, ut uideamus plerisque usu euenire, qui nimia ominum superstitione non suoapte corde sed alterius uerbo reguntur ac per angiporta reptantes consilia ex alienis uocibus colligunt et, ut ita dixerim, non animo sed auribus cogitant.

In these types of situations [i.e. when he was in danger] Socrates used to say that he heard some voice from a divine source (so it says in Plato), just in case anyone should think that he took all his omens from the crowd of speakers. For even, when he was alone with Phaedrus, with no other witnesses, outside the boundary of the city, in the shade of a tree, he sensed that announcing signal telling him not to cross the little stream of the River Ilissus until he had appeased, through a recantation, the indignation of Love, which he had

particularly philosophical knowledge? Or a parody of such? As we shall see, this all boils down to how we read the ‘philosophising ass’ (10.33).

²⁴ See Sandy (1997) 253 and Trapp (2001).

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stirred up by his critique. In addition, if he had been in the habit of seeking out omens, he would have occasionally understood some as encouraging his actions as well, as we see happen in practice to many people, who are excessively reverent towards omens and are ruled not by their own heart but by another's words, and who skulk through alleyways culling instructions from the words of others, who think, in other words, not with their minds but with their ears.

Kirichenko has made the link between the two passages so as to add weight to the Platonic reference in the *Metamorphoses*:

What further corroborates the idea that Socrates' river-crossing handicap may be intended as part of the Platonic allusion is that Apuleius shows interest in the corresponding passage from the *Phaedrus* elsewhere – by summarising it in *De Genio Socratis*.²⁵

Kirichenko makes the *De deo Socratis* passage subject to the interpretation of the *Metamorphoses* by stating that Apuleius was 'summarising' the *Phaedrus* passage. Yet this seriously underestimates how Apuleius uses the *Phaedrus* passage in this part of his lecture and, furthermore, how this particular use has additional impact on how we read the passage from the *Metamorphoses*. The use of the *Phaedrus* passage is pivotal to Apuleius' argument that there is a great difference between the divine nature of the 'certain kind of voice' heard by Socrates compared with the use of human intermediaries in other prophetic situations. In fact, the discussion that immediately follows Aristomenes' tale is specifically focused on the issue of the adherence to human authority in a narrative (*Met.* 1.20):

haec Aristomenes. at ille comes eius, qui statim initio obstinata incredulitate sermonem eius respuebat, 'nihil' inquit 'hac fabula fabulosius, nihil isto mendacio absurdus.' et ad me conuersus, 'tu autem,' inquit 'uir ut habitus et habitudo demonstrat ornatus accedis huic fabulae?' 'ego uero' inquam 'nihil impossibile arbitror, sed utcumque fata decreuerint ita cuncta mortalibus prouenire. nam et mihi et tibi et cunctis hominibus multa usu uenire mira et paene infecta, quae tamen ignaro relata fidem perdant ...'

That was Aristomenes' story. But that companion of his, who at once scoffed at his tale from the beginning in stubborn incredulity, said: 'There's nothing more fabulous than that fable, there's nothing more absurd than that lie.'

²⁵ Kirichenko (2008) 94.

And, turning to me, he continued, 'How about you? Can someone as educated and cultured as you seem to be, going on your clothes and comportment, get with that story?' 'Me?' I said, 'Oh, I think nothing is impossible. Whatever the Fates have decreed, just so everything pans out for us mere mortals. Since, to me, you and all humankind, many things occur in our lives that are wondrous and seem barely possible, but they are disbelieved when reported to someone lacking their own experience of them . . .'

Apuleius' discussion of the strange quality of the voice that Socrates heeded in *De deo Socratis* appears in the *Metamorphoses* in terms of Lucius' focus on the dual power of the *fabula* of Aristomenes. Socrates' 'certain kind of voice' is one of the 'many wondrous and barely possible' (*multa . . . mira et paene infecta*) things that humans encounter in a Fate-driven world. Yet the very *exemplum* of Socrates and his voice mean that life is more bearable, just as the *lepida fabula* made the road easier to travel on. The clincher is that Lucius has been carried by his ears, when he should be 'listening', according to *De deo Socratis*, with his 'soul' (*animus*). In one sense, Lucius corrects the tale of this impostor Socrates by thinking in terms of the *Phaedrus*, but in another, especially with *De deo Socratis* in mind, he is also guilty of paying too much heed to human narratives. While the passage from *De deo Socratis* may authorise a Platonic reading of the end of the Socrates narrative, it does not do so in a passive, 'summarising' fashion. As we have seen, the whole exegetical methodology of *De deo Socratis* is based on Apuleius enacting the daemonic role as *interpres* for Plato's 'heavenly' message. It is vital to his protreptic message that he encourages the example of Socrates to listen to this divine voice and to differentiate his role as mediator of Platonic philosophy from the easy mimesis of comedy and the deceptive human interpretation of seers. In terms of Lucius' response to the *Phaedrus*-inspired tale, the very question of the genre of the *Metamorphoses* is at stake: the dichotomy of pleasure and education in the *fabula*. In fact, the response of Lucius manages to cover two possibilities: the power of the divine – the Fates – in human affairs which provokes miraculous stories; and the power of those stories to soothe the hardships of life. The same passage of *De deo*

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Socratis also informs – or more accurately complicates – another scene of tale-telling in the *Metamorphoses*.

In Book 2 of the *Metamorphoses*, after his initial erotic escapade with the slave-girl Photis, Apuleius' protagonist Lucius has dinner at the house of the miser Milo, where he encounters his hostess, the witch Pamphile, with his aunt Byrrhena's warnings still ringing in his ears (*Met.* 2.11–12):

et perinde in eius faciem oculos meos ac si Avernum lacum formidans deieceram. sed adsidue respiciens praeministrantem Photidem inibi recreabar animi, cum ecce iam uespera lucernam intuens Pamphile, 'quam largus' inquit 'imber aderit crastino,' et percontanti marito qui comperisset istud, respondit sibi lucernam praedicere. quod dictum ipsius Milo risu secutus, 'grandem' inquit 'istam lucernam Sibyllam pascimus, quae cuncta caeli negotia et solem ipsum de specula candelabri contuetur.' ad haec ego subiciens 'sunt' aio 'prima huiusce diuinationis experimenta. nec mirum, licet modicum istum igniculum et manibus humanis laboratum, memorem tamen illius maioris et caelestis ignis uelut sui parentis, quid is sit editurus in aetheris uertice diuino praesagio et ipsum scire et nobis enuntiare.'

Just in case, I had averted my eyes from her face, as if fearing looking into Lake Avernus. But by continually looking over at Photis, who was waiting on the table, I was able to revitalise my soul from the brink, when – just picture it – Pamphile, inspecting the lamp, said, 'An abundance of rain shall fall tomorrow', and when her husband asked her how she knew this, she replied that the lamp had predicted it. Milo then said, with a laugh, 'That's one impressive Sibyl we're feeding in that there lamp, who surveys all the business of heaven and the sun itself from a-top her chandelier'. To this, I shot back, 'I believe these are the elementary proofs of a certain kind of divination. And no wonder that such a modest flame, though made by human hands, can still recollect that greater and heavenly fire, like its own father, so that, by a divine sign, it can know for itself and announce to us what He is going to enact in the ethereal heights.

Lucius' response to Pamphile's divination, as a direct response to Milo's ridicule of his wife, parallels his immediate response to Aristomenes' companion. Once again, Lucius' initial – 'philosophising' – response is followed by another: the tale of his encounter with the prophet Diophanes (*Met.* 2.12):

nam et Corinthi nunc apud nos passim Chaldaeus quidam hospes miris totam ciuitatem responsis turbulentat, et arcana fatorum stipibus emerendis edicit in uulgum.

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For now in Corinth, we have among us a Chaldaean visitor, who is turning the whole city upside-down by his amazing oracular pronouncements and the secrets of Fate which he unveils to all-comers at a price.

Lucius proceeds to outline the type of pronouncements this Chaldean makes, including one regarding his present adventure story (*Met.* 2.12):

nunc enim gloriam satis floridam, nunc historiam magnam et incredundam fabulam et libros me futurum.

Now my glory will be sufficiently rosy, now I'll become a grand narrative and an unbelievable parable written down in books.

But unlike his previous two-pronged verdict, Lucius does not have the last word. Milo smugly responds to Lucius' exemplary tale by asking about the Chaldaean visitor, what he looked like and what his name was. After Lucius describes him, Milo identifies him as that same Diophanes who was deceived by the businessman Cerdo. The story runs as follows. Amidst a crowd of citizens, Cerdo approached Diophanes wanting to know a suitable day to travel. The Chaldaean presaged a day and just as Cerdo was putting down the money to pay him, Diophanes became distracted by a friend of his and by recounting his own Odyssean traveller's tales. Cerdo proceeds to use this distraction to run off without paying and Diophanes is made a laughing-stock for the crowd that surrounds him. The irony that Milo finds in this story is that the figure who is telling people their destinies and future journeys is unaware of his own destiny, not only as a laughing-stock amid the crowd, distracted by the retelling of his past travels, but also unknowing of the storm he was not able to predict for himself in those travels. This lack of self-awareness is set to undermine Diophanes' authority in presaging Lucius' future. There is further tension between what Lucius will become and what Diophanes became, between the great history, the incredible tale and books of the Odyssean traveller and the object of public derision. This juxtaposition articulates the difference between the *gloria* associated with *libri* and the dangers of being put on stage as a spectacle. At length – and at great length – in the novel, Lucius

himself will become a laughing-stock, not only in the theatre at the Risus festival, but also in his capacity as an entertaining ass in Book 10. Indeed, towards the dénouement of the *Metamorphoses*, Lucius-the-ass responds to his potential 'performance' in the theatre as being 'shamed by the infamy of a public spectacle' (*infamia publici spectaculi depudescerem*, *Met.* 10.29). In many ways, much as Lucius-the-ass enjoys spectacle, he himself does not want to *become* the spectacle.

The tension between what Diophanes can tell Lucius about his future and what he cannot see himself about his own (both in the storm and in the misfortune of being duped by Cerdo and giving the crowd a butt), like Lucius' justification for the divination of Pamphile, has been related to the same passage of *De deo Socratis* used to ground the *Phaedrus* reference in the tale of 'Socrates'. O'Brien has shown how the portrayal of Socrates in *De deo Socratis* as someone who listens to the divine voice and not the human-uttered omens of seers, informs Apuleius' characterisation of Lucius in general and specifically the scene between him and Milo concerning Diophanes. She writes:

Apuleius exhorts the wise man to listen to his own soul. The fool is ruled by the words of others. He has such a desire for this discourse that he looks for it through alleyways and becomes a prisoner of this discourse. A detrimental effect results because he thinks with his ears and not with his mind. Lucius is always too anxious to listen to the words of others from Diophanes to Milo, from Aristomenes to Thelyphron.²⁶

This juxtaposition sides with Milo in that Lucius is a non-Socratic figure who is far too willing to listen to interpreters of omens such as Diophanes. Juxtaposing these passages, we could make the obvious observation that Apuleius is parodying Lucius as a non-Socratic figure, as a dupe and not a sage, since he is too willing to listen to interpreters of omens such as Diophanes. We may then claim that, within this characterisation, the Platonist author, Apuleius, is indirectly showing his philosophical affiliations. One can imagine a voice coming from the philosophical work to tell us how to read the fictional scene: 'Don't be like my Lucius in the *Metamorphoses*, but be like

²⁶ O'Brien (2002) 66.

my Socrates in *De deo Socratis*.’ Yet, as with Lucius’ tale of Socrates, there is far more nuance in the interaction between the fictional and philosophical text. The first part of Lucius’ defence of Pamphile’s divination has close associations with the general set-up of *daemones* in *De deo Socratis* (Soc. 6.133–4):

per hos eosdem, ut Plato in Symposio autumat, cuncta denuntiata et magorum uaria miracula omnesque praesagiorum species reguntur. eorum quippe de numero praediti curant singuli, proinde ut est cuique tributa prouincia, uel somniis conformandis uel extis fissiculandis uel praepetibus gubernandis uel oscinibus erudiendis uel uatibus inspirandis uel fulminibus iaculandis uel nubibus coruscandis ceterisque adeo per quae futura dinoscimus. quae cuncta caelestium uoluntate et numine et auctoritate, sed daemonum obsequio et opera et ministerio fieri arbitrandum est.

Through these same powers – so Plato asserts in the *Symposium* – all announcements, the magicians’ repertoire of miracles, and every form of presentiments are controlled. Indeed, from their ranks there are designated individuals who are responsible for particular activities, with each assigned his own province: they fabricate dreams, mark entrails, control the divinatory flight of birds, teach oracular meanings of birds’ cries or inspire prophets, throw thunderbolts, make clouds flash, indeed all the other activities through which we may discern the future. All these things must be thought to be taking place on account of the will, power, and authority of the heavenly powers, but by the duty, effort, and aid of *daemones*.

The correspondences between the two passages are many. Lucius’ account of the lamp ‘announcing to us’ (*nobis enuntiare*) through ‘divine sign’ (*diuino praesagio*) of the ‘heavenly fire’ (*caelestis ignis*) is echoed in how Apuleius articulates Plato’s account of the role of the *daemones*, who transmit ‘all pronouncements’ (*cuncta denuntiata*) and who ‘direct’ of ‘predictions of all forms’ (*omnesque praesagiorum species reguntur*). And these things are done by the will, power and authority of the heavenly powers (*cuncta caelestium uoluntate et numine et auctoritate... fieri*). Even the clear political metaphorical language of *De deo Socratis* is fleshed out in Milo’s ridicule of the lamp as a member of his own household. So, given the correspondences between Lucius’ initial response to Pamphile’s divination and Apuleius’ account of Platonic demonology, it would seem that we have a fictional character (Lucius)

ventriloquised by our Platonist author (Apuleius). However, the reference to ‘inspiring seers’ sets up a second part of Lucius’ response which in turn is ridiculed by Milo and undercut in *De deo Socratis*. Here again we cannot read *De deo Socratis* as the ‘master text’ for the dialogue between Lucius and Milo, because the fictional narrative ‘impersonates’ the same text for two sides of an argument. Moreover, this fictional scene contributes to the protreptic force of *De deo Socratis*, whereby it is not simply the recognition of *daemones* as intermediaries but the cultivation of your own *animus* that matters, just as it is not simply listening to wonderful narratives with your ears, but also with your *animus*. When philosophy ‘appears’ – in the form of a theme, a name or a situation – we are manipulated into first recognising a manifestation to the philosophical work and then witnessing it being parodied. But, as the case of *De deo Socratis* shows, the truth cannot be so simply mapped onto a specific, decontextualised passage of a ‘philosophical work’.

This reading intimates that any discussion of Platonism in terms of genre, references and developments in the *Metamorphoses* is insufficient. Instead, I would argue that we must see the basic narratological force of the novel in terms of Apuleius’ Platonism as we have witnessed it develop across the corpus. In the spirit of previous approaches to Apuleius’ Platonism, such Platonist total readings have been offered and, on the whole, rejected. For example, where Penwill described the *Metamorphoses* as ‘a Platonist’s personal account of how he finally escaped from the cave of delusion into the sunlight of reality’,²⁷ in direct opposition, though borrowing Penwill’s basic pattern, Kenney argued that Apuleius ultimately abandoned his Platonist and Isiac project (adopted to follow Plutarch) because ‘by the time Lucius-Apuleius comes to tell his tale, the cult of Isis and Osiris appears to him as delusive as the pursuit of

²⁷ Penwill (1975) 76. Penwill (1975) 78–9 n. 32 elaborates on this reading as based on Plato’s Cave with reference to the gods in the Cupid and Psyche episode: they are ‘flickering images’ to the ‘true sunlight’ of Isis and Osiris. This is in line with Heller (1983) on the significance of the eleventh book.

witchcraft'.²⁸ These basic Platonic narrative patterns, authorised by their particular conceptions of Apuleius' Platonism, in their positive and negative manifestations, delineate the general dichotomy of interpretations of the final Isis book as split between serious and comic reading. But they also gesture towards the more nuanced methodological possibility that my book has aimed to sketch.

As we have seen, Apuleius' Platonism as the impersonation of philosophy works as a powerful mode of characterisation. His corpus replays a core narrative about how philosophy became Platonic philosophy and how the philosopher becomes a Platonic philosopher. The peak of this trajectory is how Apuleius ultimately achieves a position to speak his brand of Platonic philosophy. Apuleius' tells this tale in *De Platone* as well as for himself on trial in the *Apologia*. This narrative is encapsulated in the dual formation of Platonic philosophy as both Socratic in the *labor*, the filing down with *ratio* and Platonic in the *elegantia* of its dressed up *oratio*. But the *Metamorphoses* is not a narrative about a philosopher. Neither protagonist – Lucius *actor* – nor the narrator – Lucius *auctor* – can by any (well, almost any!) stretch of the imagination be classed as philosophical characters. Nonetheless, this does not mean that the *Metamorphoses* cannot offer a 'narratology for philosophy', a theoretically nuanced account of how philosophy operates *as* a narrative.²⁹ Rather than the metaphysical narrative of the escape from the cave or the failed Platonist narrative of the Isis-Osiris cult as yet another delusion, the *Metamorphoses* can offer an insight into how both operate in tandem as stages of the idealised philosophical narrative. By weighing in on the *Metamorphoses* I am committed to seeing Apuleius' Platonism as a methodology. I will first show how Winkler takes one approach to Apuleius' Platonism by making the Socratic figure the poster-boy of his aporetic reading; then I shall explore a typical response to Winkler that privileges the allusive texture of the novel as establishing a horizon

²⁸ Kenney (2003) 186 n. 105.

²⁹ I thank Erik Gunderson for this slogan which he used to characterise my work at the delivery of a talk in Toronto.

of expectations for the Platonisation of the narrative.³⁰ It is this response – especially as ‘master text’ and response to Winkler’s methodology – that can form a new Platonic reading. While Winkler’s reading sets up a ‘philosophical situation’ within the very fabric of its narrative, his respondents emphasise literary texture in the paratextual passages of Prologue, Cupid and Psyche inset and Isis book to show the relationship between the character of the narrator and his narration as one of author and reader. In short, this debate articulates the well-worn Socratic tale told in Platonic form. The best way for me to show this is by offering an exemplary reading of a pivotal moment in the *Metamorphoses*: the ‘philosophising ass’.

The asinine philosopher

After the Judgement of Paris pantomime, Lucius the ass-protagonist breaks into an impassioned polemic against corrupt legal systems only to be instantly quashed for his philosophising by his reformed narrator-self (*Met.* 10.33):³¹

quale autem et illud iudicium apud legiferos Athenienses catos illos et omnis scientiae magistros? nonne diuinae prudentiae senex, quem sapientia praetulit cunctis mortalibus deus Delphicus, fraude et inuidia nequissimae factionis circumuentus uelut corruptor adolescentiae, quam frenis cohercebat, herbae pestilentis suco noxio peremptus est relinquens ciuibus ignominiae perpetuae maculam, cum nunc etiam egregii philosophi sectam eius sanctissimam praeoptent et summo beatitudinis studio iurent in ipsius nomen? sed nequis indignationis meae reprehendat impetum secum sic reputans: ‘ecce nunc patiemur philosophantem nobis asinum?’, rursus, unde decessi, reuertar ad fabulam.

And what can I say about that trial among the clever law-giving Athenians, those teachers of every kind of wisdom? Was not that old man of divine prudence, whom the Delphic god Apollo set above the rest of mortals, ensnared by the deceit and jealousy of basest of factions for being a corrupter of the young, whom he had in fact reined in? Was he not killed by the deadly sap of

³⁰ Graverini (2007) is representative here.

³¹ The only other explicit references to philosophy and philosophers occur in the mention of the philosopher Sextus (*Sexto philosopho*, *Met.* 1.2) in Lucius’ maternal genealogy and the character dressed up as a philosopher as part of the Isiac procession (*philosophum fingeret*, *Met.* 11.8).

the poisonous herb, leaving the stain of a timeless shame on the citizens, even though now all the most distinguished philosophers follow that most holy sect of his and in the pursuit of the highest form of happiness, they swear on his name? But before I am reprimanded for my indignant outburst, with someone objecting ('Come on, do we have to put up with this philosophising ass?'), I'd better get back to the story, at the point I deviated from.

Lucius' philosophising outburst has been read as bound up with the exemplary role of Socrates elsewhere in his corpus.³² Furthermore, the reference to *secta* can be understood as a self-referential re-imagining of Apuleius' own Platonism.³³ Winkler reads the moment of the 'philosophizing ass' as representative of his own reading of the work as a whole:

Principally, all in the *AA* can be claimed as philosophy filtered through popular entertainment, with an emphasis on vulgarity (*skommata*) and lack of careful coordination ('stitching together' = *conseram*, 1.1). This reading would make the ass's lecture in front of the Corinthian theater (10.33) the master signifier for the rest of the text: 'How long must we endure this philosophizing ass?'

To understand what Winkler means in his account of the 'philosophising ass', it is helpful if we track his use of the term 'master signifier' throughout his book. The idea first appears in his summary of different types of readings elicited by the novel:

Each of these readings is based on the synoptic comparison of *The Golden Ass* with a master text, a document or writing that is given privileged status in the decoding of *AA*. The decoding text may be part of the *AA* or a different text altogether, but in each case the assumption is that we need a Rosetta Stone, a master signifier that will allow us to make sense of an ambiguous message. The *AA* is placed in one column as *explanandum* and one or another text in a parallel column as *explanans*.³⁴

He then explains that the *explanans* column for the philosophical reading (iii) is filled by giving 'privileged explanatory status to the name Platonicus'.³⁵ The 'autobiographical' and sophistic readings (i and iv) place the *Florida* and *Apologia* in that column. The Lucianic (v) and religious (ii) readings take an inter- and intra-textual approach, with the *Onos* and the *Isis* book

³² Alvarez (1999). ³³ Krabbe (2003) 305–6.

³⁴ Winkler (1985) 7. ³⁵ Winkler (1985) 7.

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in the *explanans* column respectively. Winkler then explains that the need for a master signifier originates in the text as a response to the speech of the priest Mithras in Book 11:

The fundamental characteristic of the five classes of reading outlined above is not only that they translate or 'solve' the *AA* by appeal to a privileged master text, but that they have all been stung into doing so by the felt discontinuity of the priests' speech at 11.15. The critical completions are various ways of coping with the curious blend of rightness and wrongness about Mithras' rereading.³⁶

This leads Winkler to postulate his conception of the novel as 'hermeneutic entertainment'. He glosses this term as follows:

In particular that entertainment focuses on the two related issues of how one version of events is *authorized* over others and what authority to give to any character who narrates his or her *own* experiences rather than hearsay. These two themes – the authorization of a text's meaning and the credibility of ego-narrative – are alluded to in the Apuleian phrase (3.11) that I have chosen for my title, *Auctor & Actor*, 'Author and Actor/Agent'.³⁷

Winkler then proceeds to outline his reading which dramatises the search for and resistance to any interpretive master text, only to release his own such master text:

The first stage of my analysis of *The Golden Ass* will be to explore the scenes where characters find or miss a meaning, where truth is rejected or a lie embraced. It might turn out that the relations of meaning between narrators and their audiences will point to a privileged text, and that a master signifier will come to seem relevant even before Mithras offers his. But that question must be left open, and the text must be allowed to speak for itself about what texts can mean. In a sense, of course, I have already chosen my master text. I give a position of privilege to those portions of *The Golden Ass* that are models (whether serious or ironic) for the process of reading, of interpreting a scene or tale.³⁸

This is the end of Winkler's discussion of mastery, aside from a few passing comments about literal masters, until he unleashes the following revelation, that is, I would argue, intended to explode his whole methodology. First he reiterates his methodology as follows:

³⁶ Winkler (1985) 8–9. ³⁷ Winkler (1985) 13. ³⁸ Winkler (1985) 13.

A narratology for philosophy

The *AA* insistently raises and evades the question of its own authoritative meaning as a way of illustrating and actually reproducing that state of *aporia* toward the cosmos that can only be resolved by a radically individual and unsharable leap of faith. Apuleius does not recommend that leap, he does not discourage that leap, he only signifies that it is there for some to make. The paraphrase of Herakleitos in the last sentence may suggest that my hidden master text is the history of philosophy and that the intertextual grid I use in screening the novel is constructed from the classes of Skepticism – Sextus Empiricus, Cicero's *Academics*, and Timon's poetry on Pyrrho. I suspect that there are lines of research that would connect the novel of Apuleius *Platonicus philosophus* with the history of Skepticism, both Academic and popular, and above all with its elusive founding author, Plato/Socrates... Insofar as *The Golden Ass* makes us ask hard questions and does not supply authoritative answers, it may be called Platonic/Socratic. But the Apuleian performance displays a sharp turn to the screw in first generating its own state of common opinions or *doxa* in Books 1–10 and then forcing the reader to question those appearances. As an emblem of this elusive philosophical gambit – a Platonic dialogue between author and reader rather than characters in the script – I select the hero of the first tale, as he first appears: Socrates dressed in a *centunculus*, a rag garment stitched together from odd scraps (1.6), a motley costume of mime.³⁹

Winkler's hero for his reading – Socrates in motley – is paralleled with the 'elusive founding author' of Academic Scepticism – Socrates/Plato. This character reappears in Winkler's final reference to the master text in a footnote. In a discussion of exegetes and confessors, Winkler differentiates between the two in terms of their relationship to the tale they tell. The former interpret a story or dream, while the latter tell their own story:

There are also philosophical entertainers who begged for a living in the same marketplaces and temple areas inhabited by Isiac devotees: 'Alexandria has a large population of Cynics, as they are called, produced by their philosophy as other men are from theirs, people whose convictions are certainly not specious or vulgar – but they have to live too: so they work the crowds at intersections and along narrow streets and at the temple gates, conning boys and sailors and such, stitching together crude jokes and long-winded chatter and sharp marketplace answers' (Dio Chrysostom 32.9). In fairness to

³⁹ Winkler (1985) 125–6. I have it from a reliable source that Winkler's Rosetta Stone was Kierkegaard's *Stages on Life's Way* and *Johannes Climacus* – the concluding unscientific postscript.

Conclusion (*Metamorphoses*)

method, we must admit that this *Sitz im Leben* has as much that can be fitted to the eleven books of *The Golden Ass* as the confessor model.⁴⁰

Then the footnote appended to this passage makes the ‘philosophizing ass’ the ‘master signifier’ of the whole work:

Principally, all in the *AA* can be claimed as philosophy filtered through popular entertainment, with an emphasis on vulgarity (*skommata*) and lack of careful coordination (‘stitching together’ = *conseram*, 1.1). This reading would make the ass’s lecture in front of the Corinthian theater (10.33) the master signifier for the rest of the text: ‘How long must we endure this philosophizing ass?’⁴¹

The stitching together of jokes, chatter and sharp answers literally evokes Socrates’ cloak. In following Winkler’s mastery, in entertaining his hermeneutics, we have moved from the idea of a master text as a condition of reading to one grounded in philosophical history. But this is precisely the point at which I depart from Winkler’s analysis. The traditions of Academic Scepticism and the Cynic tradition of the Socratic philosopher are only one aspect of Apuleius’ Platonising and philosophising. We saw in the *Apologia* and *Florida* that the Cynic played an important role in refining one particular aspect of the philosopher, but was by no means the whole picture and cast aside when the question of the specifically Platonic philosopher arose.

Return of the philosophising ass

si audire me uelles, petendum potius ab Apuleio Madaurensi ut in libro philosophantis asini locum habeas.

If you want my advice, you should ask Apuleius of Madaura to assign you a place in his book about the philosophising ass.⁴²

Responses to Winkler, especially his aporetic reading, have questioned his particular brand of Platonism adopted. This

⁴⁰ Winkler (1985) 241.

⁴¹ Winkler (1985) 242; he continues ‘It would produce perhaps a Lucianic reading of the *AA*, like that of A. Heiserman, *The Novel before the Novel* (Chicago/London, 1977): 145–66.’

⁴² Petarch *Invective against a Physician*, 65, as quoted in Carver (2007).

approach has been seen as in direct contradiction to Apuleius' self-presentation as a Platonist elsewhere. Dowden asks whether we 'may wonder whether W[inkler]'s Apuleius squares entirely with the philosopher who endorsed Platonism and told audiences how it was'.⁴³ Other responses to Winkler have highlighted the intertextual richness of the text to ground certain readings.⁴⁴ This approach has worked for the Platonism of the *Metamorphoses* as well. Allusions to the *Phaedrus* have been identified in the Prologue.⁴⁵ Kirichenko sees the Socratic aversion to written texts of the *Phaedrus* as mirrored by Apuleius and supported by Plato in the *Republic*, putting Plato in an un-Platonic context.⁴⁶ The linking of the Prologue speaker and the 'philosophising ass' comment maintains the image of the narrator as somehow Socratic. But the joke works on a different level. In the Prologue it is the style of narration and writing that is emphasised as somehow un-Platonic (or more precisely un-Socratic). Kirichenko undercuts the significance of the 'philosophising ass' by bringing in the role of Pythagoras in the Isis book. The one philosopher (Pythagoras) parodies the other (Socrates). But there is another way.

Let us consider the 'philosophising ass' moment from these perspectives. For Winkler it is a sign of the 'confessor' mode breaking out in the narrator/*auctor*. But the self-aware, critical comment hints at a different role that we can understand as a 'condition' for its utterance. If we look to the *Apologia* and another use of the verb *philosophari*, we can see this other element. The danger of philosophising is raised in the *Apologia* (*Apol.* 13.1):

da igitur ueniam Platoni philosopho uersuum eius de amore, ne ego necesse habeam contra sententiam Neoptolemi Enniani pluribus philosophari. uel si tu id non facis, ego me facile patiar in huiuscemodi uersibus culpari cum Platone.

Therefore grant pardon to the philosopher Plato for his verses on love, or else I will have to go against the pronouncement of Ennian Neoptolemus by philosophising excessively; or, if you do not do this, I will easily endure being criticised with Plato for writing this kind of verse.

⁴³ Dowden (1987) 41. ⁴⁴ Graverini (2007).

⁴⁵ Trapp (2001) and Kirichenko (2008). ⁴⁶ Kirichenko (2008) 105.

Keulen contrasts this passage with two uses of the same Ennius quotation in Gellius:

Whereas Gellius' use of the quotation confirms his general dislike of the 'dangerous allurements' of deceitful Greek knowledge, such as treacherous dialectical subtleties and sophisms, Apuleius rather seems to restrain himself (with difficulty), by quoting Ennius, from doing the thing to which he, being a Platonic philosopher, feels a natural propensity: *philosophari* – a propensity which becomes an object of self-satire in the *Metamorphoses*, when Apuleius assumes the satirical role of the *asinus philosophans* (*Met.* 10.33.4).⁴⁷

But Keulen's balancing of Gellius and Apuleius misses a Ciceronian angle. At the start of the second book of the *Tusculan Disputations*, Cicero, like Apuleius, corrects the Ennian tag and says that he must speak at length on philosophy. Both the narrator and Apuleius cut their philosophising short, but, as the Ciceronian text makes clear, this *recusatio* is not a condition of philosophy, which is abundant, but a use of it. One way of looking at this abundance is to point to the diatribe and the details that the ass is 'outspoken' and his manifesto is extreme. Another way is seeing that there is an oxymoron between the ass and his discourse. Philosophy is out of place in the mouth of a donkey because it is universal, as Apuleius dubs philosophy in *Florida* 13. Perhaps surprisingly, in spite of an extended, illuminating discussion of the title *Aureus Asinus*, Winkler does not extend the figure of the 'philosophising ass' to the title. He calls it an oxymoron, a 'puzzling conjunction of opposites'.⁴⁸ What is pivotal here is the intervention of the 'you' that admonishes Lucius *auctor* from being a philosophising ass in the present time.

My readings of *De Platone*, *De mundo*, *De deo Socratis*, the *Apologia* and *Florida* all highlighted the role of authorial protreptic in terms of the exegete or philosopher-speaker. For Winkler's analysis of the *Metamorphoses*, these could be classed under the exegete and confessor. One aspect of the narrator of these works has been privileged: impersonation. As a whole, I showed how Apuleius' accounts of his own literary corpus are set to 'impersonate' Plato's *corpus* of

⁴⁷ Keulen (2009b) 108.

⁴⁸ Winkler (1985) 299.

philosophy. In individual works, we see various strategies of impersonation at play, from the biographical exegesis of *De Platone*, to the catscopic and daemonic perspectives of the *rec-tor mundi* and *interpres* in *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis*, and from Platonising figure of philosopher as author in the *Apolo-gia* to the philosophising orator in the *Florida*. Yet, while in my narrative so far the *Metamorphoses* has played a minor role, it is in this figure of impersonation that it has most to say to the rest of the corpus. For Winkler and beyond, the role of the narrator and his tales is perhaps the central problem of the *Metamor-phoses*. As Winkler makes clear, the title ‘philosophising ass’ is not meant to evoke the *actor* Lucius, but the *auctor* Lucius, retelling his own narrative:

‘Philosophizing’ refers in the first place to the sermonette just (10.33) uttered by the narrator *in the present time*, not by the actor in the past.⁴⁹

The joke is that the human narrator is acting like an ass, while he is relating the tale of his life as an ass. If read in terms of Winkler’s analysis, the narrator is a street-preacher, a confes-sional Cynic. But if the *Metamorphoses* characterises its narra-tor as a Cynic, in what sense can the novel be Platonic? Here O’Brien has the best and most convincing answer: at the level of discourse. She writes: ‘Apuleius tries to show the existence of a nobler and true discourse which can be “spoken” by the soul.’⁵⁰ In her note attached to this statement, O’Brien refer-ences, without comment, the speech of Lucius to Isis. In fact, what she may have meant to refer to is the following description of Isis (*Met.* 11.3):

eius mirandam speciem ad uos etiam referre conitar, si tamen mihi disserendi tribuerit facultatem paupertas oris humani uel ipsum numen eius dapsilem copiam elocutilis facundiae subministrauerit.

Her miraculous appearance I shall try to relate to you too, if only the poverty of human language can contribute some means of expression, or the deity herself can administer a rich abundance of rhetorical skill.

Too has juxtaposed this passage with *Apologia* in the inability to name the supreme deity.⁵¹ But she also allows for the

⁴⁹ Winkler (1985) 150.

⁵⁰ O’Brien (2002) 45.

⁵¹ Too (1996) 150.

reading that such language, rather than showing the goddess as she is, actually hides her even more. The other way in which Isis is 'shown' is through her agency by which the *copia* ('abundance') whereby she can be praised becomes a new voice for Lucius the ass in the form of the retrospective narration of the Isiac initiate.⁵² The *ad uos etiam referre conitar* ('I shall try to relate to you too') has, to my knowledge, not been picked up as a reworking of those opening words of the Prologue (*at ego tibi, Met. 1.1*).⁵³ This starts a whole series of addresses to a fictive reader in the Isis book.⁵⁴ Apuleius, therefore, not only characterises his narrator as a 'philosophising ass', but he also glosses this by means of his discourse. The *auctor* narrator appears to admonish himself for one type of discourse and to show how Isis has endowed him with heavenly eloquence. The difference between an ass-tale and the embellishments of the narrative, such as ekphrasis, can be seen in this juxtaposition, as for example the language of the Isiac initiate is evoked in that of the narrator in terms of Cupid's house (*Met. 4.28*).⁵⁵ Here we have the Isiac initiate *auctor* calling on his deity to give him voice. What we have is stark juxtaposition between the *indignatio* and the prayer. At the level of discourse, the Socrates/Plato character has been 'narrated'. The traditional problem of Books 1–10 and Book 11 becomes a narratology for philosophy, a dramatisation of the role of Plato in filing down with reason and dressing up with discourse. But this does not mean that the parodic element must be removed. The 'philosophising ass' becomes the initiate lawyer at the end of the tale. This is already apparent from the opening of Book 11 and the prayer to the moon where the ass's *oratio* is anything but asinine.⁵⁶

Nevertheless, the moment was offered. Here again the Prologue helps. The Platonic language of the Prologue has always been seen in tandem with the question of the identity of the

⁵² See Finkelpearl (1998) 208 and (2003) and Hunter (2007), 41–6.

⁵³ In spite of the exhaustive study by Graverini (2007) 1–55.

⁵⁴ On which see Zimmermann (2000).

⁵⁵ On the ekphrasis of Cupid's house, see Murgatroyd (1997).

⁵⁶ As Beroaldo has it: 'At the beginning of the book, the oration eloquently delivered to the moon is not asinine but theological' (*in principio eloquenter oratio non asinialis sed theologica ad lunam*). As quoted by Carver (2007) 181.

speaker. But what happens when that speaker is associated with the Cynic? The question of the relationship between philosophical identity and writing is the main riff of the biography of Plato. Apuleius defeated all other Socratics, not only in his *labor* but also the *elegantia* of his expression, while he filled his books with lessons from the Pythagoreans. In the *Metamorphoses*, between the appearances of Socrates and Pythagoras the question of appropriate written discourse is raised by the narrator. In praising Socrates, the narrator may be considered a ‘philosophising ass’, while evoking the goddess, he needs her help. To raise the question of writing amid these philosophers who did not write is an ostensibly Platonic gesture.⁵⁷ Moreover it is at the heart of Apuleius’ defence of philosophy in the *Apologia*. The speech opens with Apuleius offering a contrast between the rhetorical ‘richness’ (*copia*) of the defence and the ‘recklessness’ and poverty’ of the prosecution.⁵⁸ Therefore, the ‘philosophising ass’ and the ‘eloquent initiate’ offer two different models of the philosopher. But it is essential that such a reading is not taken too far. It is sufficient to note that Apuleius’ narrator in the *Metamorphoses* can be added to the exegetes of *De Platone* and *De mundo* and philosopher-speakers of the *Apologia* and *Florida* as an example of philosophical impersonation.

In short, Winkler gives us the tools to understand the function of only one side of Apuleius’ Platonism in the *Metamorphoses*. The Socratic figure of the confessor, the Cynic, the ‘philosophising ass’ and traditions of Academic Scepticism give the *ratio*. But this is because he is too focused on the singularity of the *Metamorphoses*. If we allow Winkler’s critics and the rest of the corpus to weigh in, we can see how the issue of *oratio* – discourse – is also balanced in this narratology. The way the narrative is written, even if it is a shaggy dog story at heart, is golden and Platonic. All Platonism must come to terms with Plato’s ‘creation’ of Socrates in the act of writing – his dressing up of philosophy with *oratio*.⁵⁹ As Schlam observes: ‘Apuleius ... tried to have the best of both worlds, to

⁵⁷ Dowden (2006) 43.

⁵⁸ Aszatlos (2005) 268–9.

⁵⁹ Derrida (1987).

revel in rhetorical artistry while preserving a sense of truth, conceived in loosely Platonic terms.⁶⁰ This sense of truth can be seen in the biography of Plato in *De Platone* and, perhaps most significantly, in the family drama and civic discourse of the *Apologia* and *Florida*. But in each case, we need the exegesis to follow the Platonic biography and the Platonising first part of the *Apologia* and philosophical anecdotage of *Florida* 18 to make the message whole.

It is not without considerable reluctance that I offer this brief discussion of how the main approach of this book could be extended to the *Metamorphoses*. To counterbalance the usual dynamic between the rest of the corpus and the masterpiece, I am committed to a decentring of the corpus, restricting any discussion of the work of fiction to my footnotes. Not discussing the *Metamorphoses* would also have given you the freedom to re-read it in light of what I have been discussing here. Maybe then you would agree that the *Metamorphoses* is a narratology for philosophy because it not only traces the *labor* of the stages in the biography of Plato, but also by its very narrative betrays the *elegantia* of Plato's philosophical achievement. And then you – yes, you – will see in Lucius the young Plato, instilled with polymathic *curiositas* and a false desire for fame, and appreciate how he must undergo a Socratic metamorphosis into a donkey. Yet you will also re-read the Isis book as far from representing the teleological union of Platonism and Egyptian religion but instead another stage on Lucius-Plato's way – the post-Socratic pursuit of Pythagorean wisdom and beyond. Finally, concluding in disappointment that we never get the narration of Lucius achieving the holy state of Plato, you will return to the Prologue to see that the narration itself enacts that state, not for Lucius, but for you, the scrupulous reader. You will witness the life of Plato unfold in the tension between *auctor* and *actor* and, ultimately, you will head back toward Plato himself. As such, this book prepares you for a reading of the *Metamorphoses* as a parable, a parable minus the internal context (strikingly *unlike* Cupid and Psyche), but plus

⁶⁰ Schlam (1992) 8–9 quoted in Kenney (2003) 180.

the authorial corpus (*corpus*). Only now can this novel work in the way that Winkler imagined. With the backing of Apuleius' Platonic corpus it can be both a parable of teleological holism, in which 'it' is the totality of what you get out of entertaining its hermeneutics, and it can also be a parable of deconstructive montage, for which there's no 'it', no Platonic Itness for us to get out of this work of hermeneutic entertainment (aka philosophy).

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